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A

Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME

AND

BEAUTIFUL.

The NINTH EDITION.

With an Introductory DISCOURSE concerning TASTE, and ſeveral other Additions.

LONDON:

Printed for J. DODSLEY, in Pall-mall.

MDCCLXXXII.

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THE

PREFACE.

I Have endeavoured to make this edition ſomething more full and ſatisfactory than the firſt. I have ſought with the utmoſt care, and read with equal attention, every thing which has appeared in public againſt my opinions; I have taken advantage of the candid liberty of my friends; and if by theſe means I have been better enabled to diſcover the imperfections of the work, the indulgence it has received, imperfect as it was, furniſhed me with a new motive to ſpare no reaſonable pains for its improvement. Though I have not found ſufficient reaſon, or what appeared to me ſufficient, for making any material change in my theory, I have found neceſſary in many places to explain, illuſtrate, and enforce it. I have prefixed an introductory diſcourſe concerning Taſte: it is a matter curious in itſelf; and it leads naturally enough to the

principal enquiry. This with the other explanations has made the work considerably larger; and by encreasing its bulk has, I am afraid, added to its faults; so that, notwithstanding all my attention, it may stand in need of a yet greater share of indulgence than it required at its first appearance.

They who are accustomed to studies of this nature will expect, and they will allow too for many faults. They know that many of the objects of our enquiry are in themselves obscure and intricate; and that many others have been rendered so by affected refinements or false learning; they know that there are many impediments in the subject, in the prejudices of others, and even in our own, that render it a matter of no small difficulty to shew in a clear light the genuine face of nature. They know that whilst the mind is intent on the general scheme of things, some particular parts must be neglected; that we must often submit the style to the matter, and frequently give up the praise of elegance, satisfied with being clear.

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The characters of nature are legible, it is true; but they are not plain enough to enable those who run, to read them. We must make use of a cautious, I had almost said, a timorous method of proceeding. We must not attempt to fly, when we can scarcely pretend to creep. In considering any complex matter, we ought to examine every distinct ingredient in the composition, one by one; and reduce every thing to the utmost simplicity; since the condition of our nature binds us to a strict law and very narrow limits. We ought afterwards to re-examine the principles by the effect of the composition, as well as the composition by that of the principles. We ought to compare our subject with things of a similar nature, and even with things of a contrary nature; for discoveries may be and often are made by the contrast, which would escape us on the single view. The greater number of the comparisons we make, the more general and the more certain our knowledge is like to prove, as built upon a more extensive and perfect induction.

If an enquiry thus carefully conducted, ſhould fail at laſt of diſcovering the truth, it may anſwer an end perhaps as uſeful, in diſcovering to us the weakneſs of our own underſtanding. If it does not make us knowing, it may make us modeſt. If it does not preſerve us from error, it may at leaſt from the ſpirit of error; and may make us cautious of pronouncing with poſitiveneſs or with haſte, when ſo much labour may end in ſo much uncertainty.

I could wiſh that in examining this theory, the ſame method were purſued which I endeavoured to obſerve in forming it. The objections, in my opinion, ought to be propoſed, either to the ſeveral principles as they are diſtinctly conſidered, or to the juſtneſs of the concluſion which is drawn from them. But it is common to paſs over both the premiſes and concluſion in ſilence, and to produce as an objection, ſome poetical paſſage which does not ſeem eaſily accounted for upon the principles I endeavour to eſtabliſh. This manner of proceeding I ſhould think very improper.

improper. The taſk would be infinite, if we could eſtabliſh no principle until we had previouſly unravelled the complex texture of every image or deſcription to be found in poets and orators. And though we ſhould never be able to reconcile the effect of ſuch images to our principles, this can never overturn the theory itſelf, whilſt it is founded on certain and indiſputable facts. A theory founded on experiment, and not aſſumed, is always good for ſo much as it explains. Our inability to puſh it indefinitely is no argument at all againſt it. This inability may be owing to our ignorance of ſome neceſſary mediums; *to a want of proper application; to many other cauſes beſides a defect in the principles we employ. In reality, the ſubject requires a much cloſer attention, than we dare claim from our manner of treating it.*

If it ſhould not appear on the face of the work, I muſt caution the reader againſt imagining that I intended a full diſſertation on the Sublime and Beautiful. My enquiry

went no farther than to the origin of these ideas. If the qualities which I have ranged under the head of the Sublime be all found consistent with each other, and all different from those which I place under the head of Beauty; and if those which compose the class of the Beautiful have the same consistency with themselves, and the same opposition to those which are classed under the denomination of Sublime, I am in little pain whether any body chooses to follow the name I give them or not, provided he allows that what I dispose under different heads are in reality different things in nature. The use I make of the words may be blamed, as too confined or too extended; my meaning cannot well be misunderstood.

To conclude; whatever progress may be made towards the discovery of truth in this matter, I do not repent the pains I have taken in it. The use of such enquiries may be very considerable. Whatever turns the soul inward on itself, tends to concenter its forces, and to fit it for greater and stronger

flights of ſcience. By looking into phyſical cauſes, our minds are opened and enlarged; and in this purſuit, whether we take or whether we loſe our game, the chace is certainly of ſervice. Cicero, *true as he was to the Academic philoſophy, and conſequently led to reject the certainty of phyſical, as of every other kind of knowledge, yet freely confeſſes its great importance to the human underſtanding:* "Eſt animorum ingeniorumque "noſtrorum naturale quoddam quaſi pa- "bulum conſideratio contemplatioque "naturæ." *If we can direct the lights we derive from ſuch exalted ſpeculations, upon the humbler field of the imagination, whilſt we inveſtigate the ſprings, and trace the courſes of our paſſions, we may not only communicate to the taſte a ſort of philoſophical ſolidity, but we may reflect back on the ſeverer ſciences ſome of the graces and elegancies of taſte, without which the greateſt proficiency in thoſe ſciences will always have the appearance of ſomething illiberal.*

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INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

ON

TASTE.

ON a ſuperficial view, we may ſeem to differ very widely from each other in our reaſonings, and no leſs in our pleaſures: but notwithſtanding this difference, which I think to be rather apparent, than real, it is probable that the ſtandard both of Reaſon and Taſte is the ſame in all human creatures. For if there were not ſome principles of judgment as well as of ſentiment common to all mankind, no hold could poſſibly be taken either on their reaſon or their paſſions, ſufficient to maintain the ordinary correſpondence of life. It appears indeed to be generally acknowledged, that with

regard to truth and falſehood there is ſomething fixed. We find people in their diſputes continually appealing to certain teſts and ſtandards, which are allowed on all ſides, and are ſuppoſed to be eſtabliſhed in our common nature. But there is not the ſame obvious concurrence in any uniform or ſettled principles which relate to Taſte. It is even commonly ſuppoſed that this delicate and aërial faculty, which ſeems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition, cannot be properly tried by any teſt, nor regulated by any ſtandard. There is ſo continual a call for the exerciſe of the reaſoning faculty, and it is ſo much ſtrengthened by perpetual contention, that certain maxims of right reaſon ſeem to be tacitly ſettled amongſt the moſt ignorant. The learned have improved on this rude ſcience, and reduced thoſe maxims into a ſyſtem. If Taſte has not been ſo happily cultivated, it was not that the ſubject was barren, but that the labourers were few or negligent; for to ſay

the

the truth, there are not the ſame intereſting motives to impel us to fix the one, which urge us to aſcertain the other. And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning ſuch matters, their difference is not attended with the ſame important conſequences; elſe I make no doubt but that the logic of Taſte, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, might very poſſibly be as well digeſted, and we might come to diſcuſs matters of this nature with as much certainty, as thoſe which ſeem more immediately within the province of mere reaſon. And indeed, it is very neceſſary, at the entrance into ſuch an enquiry as our preſent, to make this point as clear as poſſible; for if Taſte has no fixed principles, if the imagination is not affected according to ſome invariable and certain laws, our labour is like to be employed to very little purpoſe; as it muſt be judged an uſeleſs, if not an abſurd undertaking, to lay down rules for caprice, and to ſet up for a legiſlator of whims and fancies.

The term Taſte, like all other figurative terms, is not extremely accurate; the thing which we underſtand by it, is far from a ſimple and determinate idea in the minds of moſt men, and it is therefore liable to uncertainty and confuſion. I have no great opinion of a definition, the celebrated remedy for the cure of this diſorder. For when we define, we ſeem in danger of circumſcribing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on truſt, or form out of a limited and partial conſideration of the object before us, inſtead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining. We are limited in our enquiry by the ſtrict laws to which we have ſubmitted at our ſetting out.

——*Circa vilem patulumque morabimur orbem,*
Unde pudor proferre pedem vetat aut operis lex.

A definition may be very exact, and yet go but a very little way towards inform-

ing us of the nature of the thing defined; but let the virtue of a definition be what it will, in the order of things, it ſeems rather to follow than to precede our enquiry, of which it ought to be conſidered as the reſult. It muſt be acknowledged that the methods of diſquiſition and teaching may be ſometimes different, and on very good reaſon undoubtedly; but for my part, I am convinced that the method of teaching which approaches moſt nearly to the method of inveſtigation, is incomparably the beſt; ſince, not content with ſerving up a few barren and lifeleſs truths, it leads to the ſtock on which they grew; it tends to ſet the reader himſelf in the track of invention, and to direct him into thoſe paths in which the author has made his own diſcoveries, if he ſhould be ſo happy as to have made any that are valuable.

But to cut off all pretence for cavilling, I mean by the word Taſte no more than

that faculty or thoſe faculties of the mind, which are affected with, or which form a judgment of, the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the moſt general idea of that word, and what is the leaſt connected with any particular theory. And my point in this enquiry is, to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, ſo common to all, ſo grounded and certain, as to ſupply the means of reaſoning ſatisfactorily about them. And ſuch principles of Taſte I fancy there are; however paradoxical it may ſeem to thoſe, who on a ſuperficial view imagine, that there is ſo great a diverſity of Taſtes, both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers in man, which I know, that are converſant about external objects, are the ſenſes; the imagination; and the judgment. And firſt with

regard

regard to the Senſes. We do and we muſt ſuppoſe, that as the conformation of their organs are nearly or altogether the ſame in all men, ſo the manner of perceiving external objects is in all men the ſame, or with little difference. We are ſatisfied that what appears to be light to one eye, appears light to another; that what ſeems ſweet to one palate, is ſweet to another; that what is dark and bitter to this man, is likewiſe dark and bitter to that; and we conclude in the ſame manner of great and little, hard and ſoft, hot and cold, rough and ſmooth; and indeed of all the natural qualities and affections of bodies. If we ſuffer ourſelves to imagine, that their ſenſes preſent to different men different images of things, this ſceptical proceeding will make every ſort of reaſoning on every ſubject vain and frivolous, even that ſceptical reaſoning itſelf, which had perſuaded us to entertain a doubt concerning the agreement of

our perceptions. But as there will be little doubt that bodies preſent ſimilar images to the whole ſpecies, it muſt neceſſarily be allowed, that the pleaſures and the pains which every object excites in one man, it muſt raiſe in all mankind, whilſt it operates naturally, ſimply, and by its proper powers only; for if we deny this, we muſt imagine that the ſame cauſe operating in the ſame manner, and on ſubjects of the ſame kind, will produce different effects, which would be highly abſurd. Let us firſt conſider this point in the ſenſe of Taſte, and the rather as the faculty in queſtion has taken its name from that ſenſe. All men are agreed to call vinegar ſour, honey ſweet, and aloes bitter; and as they are all agreed in finding theſe qualities in thoſe objects, they do not in the leaſt differ concerning their effects with regard to pleaſure and pain. They all concur in calling ſweetneſs pleaſant, and ſourneſs and bitterneſs unpleaſant.

pleaſant. Here there is no diverſity in their ſentiments; and that there is not, appears fully from the conſent of all men in the metaphors which are taken from the ſenſe of Taſte. A ſour temper, bitter expreſſions, bitter curſes, a bitter fate, are terms well and ſtrongly underſtood by all. And we are altogether as well underſtood when we ſay, a ſweet diſpoſition, a ſweet perſon, a ſweet condition, and the like. It is confeſſed, that cuſtom and ſome other cauſes, have made many deviations from the natural pleaſures or pains which belong to theſe ſeveral Taſtes; but then the power of diſtinguiſhing between the natural and the acquired reliſh remains to the very laſt. A man frequently comes to prefer the taſte of tobacco to that of ſugar, and the flavour of vinegar to that of milk; but this makes no confuſion in Taſtes, whilſt he is ſenſible that the tobacco and vinegar are not ſweet, and whilſt he knows that habit alone has reconciled

conciled his palate to theſe alien pleaſures. Even with ſuch a perſon we may ſpeak, and with ſufficient preciſion, concerning Taſtes. But ſhould any man be found who declares, that to him tobacco has a Taſte like ſugar, and that he cannot diſtinguiſh between milk and vinegar; or that tobacco and vinegar are ſweet, milk bitter, and ſugar ſour; we immediately conclude that the organs of this man are out of order, and that his palate is utterly vitiated. We are as far from conferring with ſuch a perſon upon Taſtes, as from reaſoning concerning the relations of quantity with one who ſhould deny that all the parts together were equal to the whole. We do not call a man of this kind wrong in his notions, but abſolutely mad. Exceptions of this ſort, in either way, do not at all impeach our general rule, nor make us conclude that men have various principles concerning the relations of quantity, or the Taſte of things. So that

when

when it is ſaid, Taſte cannot be diſputed, it can only mean, that no one can ſtrictly anſwer what pleaſure or pain ſome particular man may find from the Taſte of ſome particular thing. This indeed cannot be diſputed; but we may diſpute, and with ſufficient clearneſs too, concerning the things which are naturally pleaſing or diſagreeable to the ſenſe. But when we talk of any peculiar or acquired reliſh, then we muſt know the habits, the prejudices, or the diſtempers of this particular man, and we muſt draw our concluſion from thoſe.

This agreement of mankind is not confined to the Taſte ſolely. The principle of pleaſure derived from ſight is the ſame in all. Light is more pleaſing than darkneſs. Summer, when the earth is clad in green, when the heavens are ſerene and bright, is more agreeable than winter, when every thing

makes a different appearance. I never remember that any thing beautiful, whether a man, a beaſt, a bird, or a plant, was ever ſhewn, though it were to an hundred people, that they did not all immediately agree that it was beautiful, though ſome might have thought that it fell ſhort of their expectation, or that other things were ſtill finer. I believe no man thinks a gooſe to be more beautiful than a ſwan, or imagines that what they call a Friezland hen excels a peacock. It muſt be obſerved too, that the pleaſures of the ſight are not near ſo complicated, and confuſed, and altered by unnatural habits and aſſociations, as the pleaſures of the Taſte are; becauſe the pleaſures of the ſight more commonly acquieſce in themſelves; and are not ſo often altered by conſiderations which are independent of the ſight itſelf. But things do not ſpontaneouſly preſent themſelves to the palate

palate as they do to the ſight; they are generally applied to it, either as food or as medicine; and from the qualities which they poſſeſs for nutritive or medicinal purpoſes, they often form the palate by degrees, and by force of theſe aſſociations. Thus opium is pleaſing to Turks, on account of the agreeable delirium it produces. Tobacco is the delight of Dutchmen, as it diffuſes a torpor and pleaſing ſtupefaction. Fermented ſpirits pleaſe our common people, becauſe they baniſh care, and all conſideration of future or preſent evils. All of theſe would lie abſolutely neglected if their properties had originally gone no further than the Taſte; but all theſe, together with tea and coffee, and ſome other things, have paſſed from the apothecary's ſhop to our tables, and were taken for health long before they were thought of for pleaſure. The effect of the drug has made us uſe it frequently; and frequent uſe,

combined

combined with the agreeable effect, has made the Taſte itſelf at laſt agreeable. But this does not in the leaſt perplex our reaſoning; becauſe we diſtinguiſh to the laſt the acquired from the natural reliſh. In deſcribing the taſte of an unknown fruit, you would ſcarcely ſay, that it had a ſweet and pleaſant flavour like tobacco, opium, or garlic, although you ſpoke to thoſe who were in the conſtant uſe of theſe drugs, and had great pleaſure in them. There is in all men a ſufficient remembrance of the original natural cauſes of pleaſure, to enable them to bring all things offered to their ſenſes to that ſtandard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it. Suppoſe one who had ſo vitiated his palate as to take more pleaſure in the Taſte of opium than in that of butter or honey, to be preſented with a bolus of ſquills; there is hardly any doubt but that he would prefer the butter or honey to this nauſeous morſel,

morſel, or to any other bitter drug to which he had not been accuſtomed; which proves that his palate was naturally like that of other men in all things, that it is ſtill like the palate of other men in many things, and only vitiated in ſome particular points. For in judging of any new thing, even of a Taſte ſimilar to that which he has been formed by habit to like, he finds his palate affected in the natural manner, and on the common principles. Thus the pleaſure of all the ſenſes, of the ſight, and even of the Taſte, that moſt ambiguous of the ſenſes, is the ſame in all, high and low, learned and unlearned.

Beſides the ideas, with their annexed pains and pleaſures, which are preſented by the ſenſe; the mind of man poſſeſſes a ſort of creative power of its own; either in repreſenting at pleaſure the images of things in the order and manner

manner in which they were received by the ſenſes, or in combining thoſe images in a new manner, and according to a different order. This power is called Imagination; and to this belongs whatever is called wit, fancy, invention, and the like. But it muſt be obſerved, that the power of the imagination is incapable of producing any thing abſolutely new; it can only vary the diſpoſition of thoſe ideas which it has received from the ſenſes. Now the imagination is the moſt extenſive province of pleaſure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our paſſions that are connected with them; and whatever is calculated to affect the imagination with theſe commanding ideas, by force of any original natural impreſſion, muſt have the ſame power pretty equally over all men. For ſince the imagination is only the repreſentation of the ſenſes, it can only be pleaſed or diſpleaſed with the images,

from

from the ſame principle on which the ſenſe is pleaſed or diſpleaſed with the realities; and conſequently there muſt be juſt as cloſe an agreement in the imaginations as in the ſenſes of men. A little attention will convince us that this muſt of neceſſity be the caſe.

But in the imagination, beſides the pain or pleaſure ariſing from the properties of the natural object, a pleaſure is perceived from the reſemblance, which the imitation has to the original: the imagination, I conceive, can have no pleaſure but what reſults from one or other of theſe cauſes. And theſe cauſes operate pretty uniformly upon all men, becauſe they operate by principles in nature, and which are not derived from any particular habits or advantages. Mr. Locke very juſtly and finely obſerves of wit, that it is chiefly converſant in tracing reſemblances: he remarks at the ſame time,

that the buſineſs of judgment is rather in finding differences. It may perhaps appear, on this ſuppoſition, that there is no material diſtinction between the wit and the judgment, as they both ſeem to reſult from different operations of the ſame faculty of *comparing*. But in reality, whether they are or are not dependant on the ſame power of the mind, they differ ſo very materially in many reſpects, that a perfect union of wit and judgment is one of the rareſt things in the world. When two diſtinct objects are unlike to each other, it is only what we expect; things are in their common way; and therefore they make no impreſſion on the imagination: but when two diſtinct objects have a reſemblance, we are ſtruck, we attend to them, and we are pleaſed. The mind of man has naturally a far greater alacrity and ſatisfaction in tracing reſemblances than in ſearching for differences: becauſe by making reſemblances we produce *new images*;

images; we unite, we create, we enlarge our ſtock: but in making diſtinctions we offer no food at all to the imagination; the taſk itſelf is more ſevere and irkſome, and what pleaſure we derive from it is ſomething of a negative and indirect nature. A piece of news is told me in the morning; this, merely as a piece of news, as a fact added to my ſtock, gives me ſome pleaſure. In the evening I find there was nothing in it. What do I gain by this, but the diſſatisfaction to find that I had been impoſed upon? Hence it is that men are much more naturally inclined to belief than to incredulity. And it is upon this principle, that the moſt ignorant and barbarous nations have frequently excelled in ſimilitudes, compariſons, metaphors, and allegories, who have been weak and backward in diſtinguiſhing and ſorting their ideas. And it is for a reaſon of this kind, that Homer and the oriental writers, though very fond of ſimilitudes, and though they often ſtrike out ſuch as are truly admirable, they ſel-

dom take care to have them exact; that is, they are taken with the general reſemblance, they paint it ſtrongly, and they take no notice of the difference which may be found between the things compared.

Now, as the pleaſure of reſemblance is that which principally flatters the imagination, all men are nearly equal in this point, as far as their knowledge of the things repreſented or compared extends. The principle of this knowledge is very much accidental, as it depends upon experience and obſervation, and not on the ſtrength or weakneſs of any natural faculty; and it is from this difference in knowledge, that what we commonly, though with no great exactneſs, call a difference in Taſte proceeds. A man to whom ſculpture is new, ſees a barber's block, or ſome ordinary piece of ſtatuary; he is immediately ſtruck and pleaſed, becauſe he ſees ſomething like an human figure; and, entirely taken up with this likeneſs, he does not at all attend to its defects.

defects. No perſon, I believe, at the firſt time of ſeeing a piece of imitation ever did. Some time after, we ſuppoſe that this novice lights upon a more artificial work of the ſame nature; he now begins to look with contempt on what he admired at firſt; not that he admired it even then for its unlikeneſs to a man, but for that general though inaccurate reſemblance which it bore to the human figure. What he admired at different times in theſe ſo different figures, is ſtrictly the ſame; and though his knowledge is improved, his Taſte is not altered. Hitherto his miſtake was from a want of knowledge in art, and this aroſe from his inexperience; but he may be ſtill deficient from a want of knowledge in nature. For it is poſſible that the man in queſtion may ſtop here, and that the maſter-piece of a great hand may pleaſe him no more than the middling performance of a vulgar artiſt; and this not for want of better or higher reliſh, but becauſe all men do

not obſerve with ſufficient accuracy on the human figure to enable them to judge properly of an imitation of it. And that the critical Taſte does not depend upon a ſuperior principle in men, but upon ſuperior knowledge, may appear from ſeveral inſtances. The ſtory of the ancient painter and the ſhoemaker is very well known. The ſhoemaker ſet the painter right with regard to ſome miſtakes he had made in the ſhoe of one of his figures, and which the painter, who had not made ſuch accurate obſervations on ſhoes, and was content with a general reſemblance, had never obſerved. But this was no impeachment to the Taſte of the painter; it only ſhewed ſome want of knowledge in the art of making ſhoes. Let us imagine, that an anatomiſt had come into the painter's working-room. His piece is in general well done, the figure in queſtion in a good attitude, and the parts well adjuſted to their various movements; yet the anatomiſt, critical in his art,

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may obſerve the ſwell of ſome muſcle not quite juſt in the peculiar action of the figure. Here the anatomiſt obſerves what the painter had not obſerved; and he paſſes by what the ſhoemaker had remarked. But a want of the laſt critical knowledge in anatomy no more reflected on the natural good Taſte of the painter, or of any common obſerver of his piece, than the want of an exact knowledge in the formation of a ſhoe. A fine piece of a decollated head of St. John the Baptiſt was ſhewn to a Turkiſh emperor; he praiſed many things, but he obſerved one defect; he obſerved that the ſkin did not ſhrink from the wounded part of the neck. The ſultan on this occaſion, though his obſervation was very juſt, diſcovered no more natural Taſte than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thouſand European connoiſſeurs, who probably never would have made the ſame obſervation. His Turkiſh Majeſty had indeed been well acquainted with that terrible

ſpectacle, which the others could only have repreſented in their imagination. On the ſubject of their diſlike there is a difference between all theſe people, ariſing from the different kinds and degrees of their knowledge; but there is ſomething in common to the painter, the ſhoemaker, the anatomiſt, and the Turkiſh emperor, the pleaſure ariſing from a natural object, ſo far as each perceives it juſtly imitated; the ſatisfaction in ſeeing an agreeable figure; the ſympathy proceeding from a ſtriking and affecting incident. So far as Taſte is natural, it is nearly common to all.

In poetry, and other pieces of imagination, the ſame parity may be obſerved. It is true, that one man is charmed with Don Bellianis, and reads Virgil coldly: whilſt another is tranſported with the Eneid, and leaves Don Bellianis to children. Theſe two men ſeem to have a Taſte very different from each other; but in fact they differ very little. In both theſe

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pieces, which inſpire ſuch oppoſite ſentiments, a tale exciting admiration is told; both are full of action, both are paſſionate; in both are voyages, battles, triumphs, and continual changes of fortune. The admirer of Don Bellianis perhaps does not underſtand the refined language of the Eneid, who, if it was degraded into the ſtyle of the Pilgrim's Progreſs, might feel it in all its energy, on the ſame principle which made him an admirer of Don Bellianis.

In his favourite author he is not ſhocked with the continual breaches of probability, the confuſion of times, the offences againſt manners, the trampling upon geography; for he knows nothing of geography and chronology, and he has never examined the grounds of probability. He perhaps reads of a ſhipwreck on the coaſt of Bohemia: wholly taken up with ſo intereſting an event, and only ſolicitous for the fate of his hero, he is not at the leaſt troubled at this

this extravagant blunder. For why ſhould he be ſhocked at a ſhipwreck on the coaſt of Bohemia, who does not know but that Bohemia may be an iſland in the Atlantic ocean? and after all, what reflection is this on the natural good Taſte of the perſon here ſuppoſed?

So far then as Taſte belongs to the imagination, its principle is the ſame in all men; there is no difference in the manner of their being affected, nor in the cauſes of the affection; but in the *degree* there is a difference, which ariſes from two cauſes principally; either from a greater degree of natural ſenſibility, or from a cloſer and longer attention to the object. To illuſtrate this by the procedure of the ſenſes, in which the ſame difference is found, let us ſuppoſe a very ſmooth marble table to be ſet before two men; they both perceive it to be ſmooth, and they are both pleaſed with it becauſe of this quality. So far they agree. But

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ſuppoſe another, and after that another table, the latter ſtill ſmoother than the former, to be ſet before them. It is now very probable that theſe men, who are ſo agreed upon what is ſmooth, and in the pleaſure from thence, will diſagree when they come to ſettle which table has the advantage in point of poliſh. Here is indeed the great difference between Taſtes, when men come to compare the exceſs or diminution of things which are judged by degree and not by meaſure. Nor is it eaſy, when ſuch a difference ariſes, to ſettle the point, if the exceſs or diminution be not glaring. If we differ in opinion about two quantities, we can have recourſe to a common meaſure, which may decide the queſtion with the utmoſt exactneſs; and this I take it is what gives mathematical knowledge a greater certainty than any other. But in things whoſe exceſs is not judged by greater or ſmaller, as ſmoothneſs and roughneſs, hardneſs and ſoftneſs, dark-

neſs and light, the ſhades of colours, all theſe are very eaſily diſtinguiſhed when the difference is any way conſiderable, but not when it is minute, for want of ſome common meaſures, which perhaps may never come to be diſcovered. In theſe nice caſes, ſuppoſing the acuteneſs of the ſenſe equal, the greater attention and habit in ſuch things will have the advantage. In the queſtion about the tables, the marble-poliſher will unqueſtionably determine the moſt accurately. But notwithſtanding this want of a common meaſure for ſettling many diſputes relative to the ſenſes and their repreſentative the imagination, we find that the principles are the ſame in all, and that there is no diſagreement until we come to examine into the pre-eminence or difference of things, which brings us within the province of the judgment.

So long as we are converſant with the ſenſible qualities of things, hardly any

more than the imagination ſeems concerned; little more alſo than the imagination ſeems concerned when the paſſions are repreſented, becauſe by the force of natural ſympathy they are felt in all men without any recourſe to reaſoning, and their juſtneſs recognized in every breaſt. Love, grief, fear, anger, joy, all theſe paſſions have in their turns affected every mind; and they do not affect it in an arbitrary or caſual manner, but upon certain, natural, and uniform principles. But as many of the works of imagination are not confined to the repreſentation of ſenſible objects, nor to efforts upon the paſſions, but extend themſelves to the manners, the characters, the actions, and deſigns of men, their relations, their virtues and vices, they come within the province of the judgment, which is improved by attention and by the habit of reaſoning. All theſe make a very conſiderable part of what are conſidered

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as the objects of Taste; and Horace sends us to the schools of philosophy and the world for our instruction in them. Whatever certainty is to be acquired in morality and the science of life; just the same degree of certainty have we in what relates to them in works of imitation. Indeed it is for the most part in our skill in manners, and in the observances of time and place, and of decency in general, which is only to be learned in those schools to which Horace recommends us, that what is called Taste by way of distinction, consists; and which is in reality no other than a more refined judgment. On the whole, it appears to me, that what is called Taste, in its most general acceptation, is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty, concerning

cerning the various relations of theſe, and concerning the human paſſions, manners, and actions. All this is requiſite to form Taſte, and the ground-work of all theſe is the ſame in the human mind; for as the ſenſes are the great originals of all our ideas, and conſequently of all our pleaſures, if they are not uncertain and arbitrary, the whole ground-work of Taſte is common to all, and therefore there is a ſufficient foundation for a concluſive reaſoning on theſe matters.

Whilſt we conſider Taſte merely according to its nature and ſpecies, we ſhall find its principles entirely uniform; but the degree in which theſe principles prevail, in the ſeveral individuals of mankind, is altogether as different as the principles themſelves are ſimilar. For ſenſibility and judgment, which are the qualities that compoſe what we commonly call a *Taſte*, vary exceedingly in various people. From a defect in the

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former of theſe qualities, ariſes a want of Taſte; a weakneſs in the latter, conſtitutes a wrong or a bad one. There are ſome men formed with feelings ſo blunt, with tempers ſo cold and phlegmatic, that they can hardly be ſaid to be awake during the whole courſe of their lives. Upon ſuch perſons, the moſt ſtriking objects make but a faint and obſcure impreſſion. There are others ſo continually in the agitation of groſs and merely ſenſual pleaſures, or ſo occupied in the low drudgery of avarice, or ſo heated in the chace of honours and diſtinction, that their minds, which had been uſed continually to the ſtorms of theſe violent and tempeſtuous paſſions, can hardly be put in motion by the delicate and refined play of the imagination. Theſe men, though from a different cauſe, become as ſtupid and inſenſible as the former; but whenever either of theſe happen to be ſtruck with any natural elegance or greatneſs, or with theſe qualities

lities in any work of art, they are moved upon the ſame principle.

The cauſe of a wrong Taſte is a defect of Judgment. And this may ariſe from a natural weakneſs of underſtanding (in whatever the ſtrength of that faculty may conſiſt) or, which is much more commonly the caſe, it may ariſe from a want of proper and well-directed exerciſe, which alone can make it ſtrong and ready. Beſides that ignorance, inattention, prejudice, raſhneſs, levity, obſtinacy, in ſhort, all thoſe paſſions, and all thoſe vices, which pervert the judgment in other matters, prejudice it no leſs in this its more refined and elegant province. Theſe cauſes produce different opinions upon every thing which is an object of the underſtanding, without inducing us to ſuppoſe, that there are no ſettled principles of reaſon. And indeed on the whole one may obſerve, that there is rather leſs difference upon matters of

Taſte among mankind, than upon moſt of thoſe which depend upon the naked reaſon; and that men are far better agreed on the excellence of a deſcription in Virgil, than on the truth or falſehood of a theory of Ariſtotle.

A rectitude of judgment in the arts, which may be called a good Taſte, does in a great meaſure depend upon ſenſibility; becauſe if the mind has no bent to the pleaſures of the imagination, it will never apply itſelf ſufficiently to works of that ſpecies to acquire a competent knowledge in them. But though a degree of ſenſibility is requiſite to form a good judgment, yet a good judgment does not neceſſarily ariſe from a quick ſenſibility of pleaſure; it frequently happens that a very poor judge, merely by force of a greater complexional ſenſibility, is more affected by a very poor piece, than the beſt judge by the moſt perfect; for as every thing new, extraordinary, grand,

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or paſſionate, is well calculated to affect ſuch a perſon, and that the faults do not affect him, his pleaſure is more pure and unmixed; and as it is merely a pleaſure of the imagination, it is much higher than any which is derived from a rectitude of the judgment; the judgment is for the greater part employed in throwing ſtumbling-blocks in the way of the imagination, in diſſipating the ſcenes of its enchantment, and in tying us down to the diſagreeable yoke of our reaſon; for almoſt the only pleaſure that men have in judging better than others, conſiſts in a ſort of conſcious pride and ſuperiority, which ariſes from thinking rightly; but then, this is an indirect pleaſure, a pleaſure which does not immediately reſult from the object which is under contemplation. In the morning of our days, when the ſenſes are unworn and tender, when the whole man is awake in every part, and the gloſs of novelty freſh upon all the objects that ſurround us, how

lively at that time are our ſenſations, but how falſe and inaccurate the judgments we form of things? I deſpair of ever receiving the ſame degree of pleaſure from the moſt excellent performances of genius which I felt at that age, from pieces which my preſent judgment regards as trifling and contemptible. Every trivial cauſe of pleaſure is apt to affect the man of too ſanguine a complexion: his appetite is too keen to ſuffer his Taſte to be delicate; and he is in all reſpects what Ovid ſays of himſelf in love,

Molle meum levibus cor eſt violabile telis,
Et ſemper cauſa eſt, cur ego ſemper amem.

One of this character can never be a refined judge; never what the comic poet calls *elegans formarum ſpectator*. The excellence and force of a compoſition muſt always be imperfectly eſtimated from its effect on the minds of any, except we know the temper and character of thoſe minds. The moſt powerful ef-

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fects of poetry and music have been displayed, and perhaps are still displayed, where these arts are but in a very low and imperfect state. The rude hearer is affected by the principles which operate in these arts even in their rudest condition; and he is not skilful enough to perceive the defects. But as arts advance towards their perfection, the science of criticism advances with equal pace, and the pleasure of judges is frequently interrupted by the faults which are discovered in the most finished compositions.

Before I leave this subject, I cannot help taking notice of an opinion which many persons entertain, as if the Taste were a separate faculty of the mind, and distinct from the judgment and imagination; a species of instinct, by which we are struck naturally, and at the first glance, without any previous reasoning, with the excellencies, or the defects of a composi-

tion. So far as the imagination and the paſſions are concerned, I believe it true, that the reaſon is little conſulted; but where diſpoſition, where decorum, where congruity are concerned, in ſhort, wherever the beſt Taſte differs from the worſt, I am convinced that the underſtanding operates and nothing elſe; and its operation is in reality far from being always ſudden, or, when it is ſudden, it is often far from being right. Men of the beſt Taſte by conſideration come frequently to change theſe early and precipitate judgments, which the mind, from its averſion to neutrality and doubt, loves to form on the ſpot. It is known that the Taſte (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a ſteady attention to our object, and by frequent exerciſe. They who have not taken theſe methods, if their Taſte decides quickly, it is always uncertainly; and their quickneſs is owing

ing to their preſumption and raſhneſs, and not any hidden irradiation that in a moment diſpels all darkneſs from their minds. But they who have cultivated that ſpecies of knowledge which makes the object of Taſte, by degrees and habitually attain not only a ſoundneſs, but a readineſs of judgment, as men do by the ſame methods on all other occaſions. At firſt they are obliged to ſpell, but at laſt they read with eaſe and with celerity, but this celerity of its operation is no proof, that the Taſte is a diſtinct faculty. Nobody, I believe, has attended the courſe of a diſcuſſion, which turned upon matters within the ſphere of mere naked reaſon, but muſt have obſerved the extreme readineſs with which the whole proceſs of the argument is carried on, the grounds diſcovered, the objections raiſed and anſwered, and the concluſions drawn from premiſes, with a quickneſs altogether as great as the Taſte can be ſuppoſed to

work with; and yet where nothing but plain reaſon either is or can be ſuſpected to operate. To multiply principles for every different appearance, is uſeleſs, and unphiloſophical too in a high degree.

This matter might be purſued much farther; but it is not the extent of the ſubject which muſt preſcribe our bounds, for what ſubject does not branch out to infinity? it is the nature of our particular ſcheme, and the ſingle point of view in which we conſider it, which ought to put a ſtop to our reſearches.

A Philo-

A Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

PART I.

SECT. I.

NOVELTY.

THE firſt and the ſimpleſt emotion which we diſcover in the human mind, is Curioſity. By curioſity I mean whatever deſire we have for, or whatever pleaſure we take in, novelty. We ſee children perpetually running from place to place to hunt out ſomething new: they catch with great eagerneſs,

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and with very little choice, at whatever comes before them; their attention is engaged by every thing, becauſe every thing has, in that ſtage of life, the charm of novelty to recommend it. But as thoſe things which engage us merely by their novelty, cannot attach us for any length of time, curioſity is the moſt ſuperficial of all the affections: it changes its object perpetually; it has an appetite which is very ſharp, but very eaſily ſatisfied; and it has always an appearance of giddineſs, reſtleſſneſs, and anxiety. Curioſity from its nature is a very active principle; it quickly runs over the greateſt part of its objects, and ſoon exhauſts the variety which is commonly to be met with in nature; the ſame things make frequent returns, and they return with leſs and leſs of any agreeable effect. In ſhort, the occurrences of life, by the time we come to know it a little, would be incapable of affecting the mind with any other ſenſations than thoſe of loathing and weari-

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neſs, if many things were not adapted to affect the mind by means of other powers beſides novelty in them, and of other paſſions beſides curioſity in ourſelves. Theſe powers and paſſions ſhall be conſidered in their place. But whatever theſe powers are, or upon what principle ſoever they affect the mind, it is abſolutely neceſſary that they ſhould not be exerted in thoſe things which a daily vulgar uſe have brought into a ſtale unaffecting familiarity. Some degree of novelty muſt be one of the materials in every inſtrument which works upon the mind; and curioſity blends itſelf more or leſs with all our paſſions.

SECT. II.

PAIN and PLEASURE.

IT ſeems then neceſſary towards moving the paſſions of people advanced in life to any conſiderable degree, that the objects

objects designed for that purpose, besides their being in some measure new, should be capable of exciting pain or pleasure from other causes. Pain and pleasure are simple ideas, incapable of definition. People are not liable to be mistaken in their feelings, but they are very frequently wrong in the names they give them, and in their reasonings about them. Many are of opinion, that pain arises necessarily from the removal of some pleasure; as they think pleasure does from the ceasing or diminution of some pain. For my part, I am rather inclined to imagine, that pain and pleasure, in their most simple and natural manner of affecting, are each of a positive nature, and by no means necessarily dependent on each other for their existence. The human mind is often, and I think it is for the most part, in a state neither of pain nor pleasure, which I call a state of indifference. When I am carried from this state into a state of actual pleasure, it

does not appear neceſſary that I ſhould paſs through the medium of any ſort of pain. If in ſuch a ſtate of indifference, or eaſe, or tranquillity, or call it what you pleaſe, you were to be ſuddenly entertained with a concert of muſic; or ſuppoſe ſome object of a fine ſhape, and bright lively colours, to be repreſented before you; or imagine your ſmell is gratified with the fragrance of a roſe; or if without any previous thirſt you were to drink of ſome pleaſant kind of wine, or to taſte of ſome ſweetmeat without being hungry; in all the ſeveral ſenſes, of hearing, ſmelling, and taſting, you undoubtedly find a pleaſure; yet if I enquire into the ſtate of your mind previous to theſe gratifications, you will hardly tell me that they found you in any kind of pain; or, having ſatisfied theſe ſeveral ſenſes with their ſeveral pleaſures, will you ſay that any pain has ſucceeded, though the pleaſure is abſolutely over? Suppoſe, on the other hand, a man in the ſame ſtate of indifference,

indifference, to receive a violent blow, or to drink of ſome bitter potion, or to have his ears wounded with ſome harſh and grating ſound; here is no removal of pleaſure; and yet here is felt, in every ſenſe which is affected, a pain very diſtinguiſhable. It may be ſaid, perhaps, that the pain in theſe caſes had its riſe from the removal of the pleaſure which the man enjoyed before, though that pleaſure was of ſo low a degree as to be perceived only by the removal. But this ſeems to me a ſubtilty, that is not diſcoverable in nature. For if, previous to the pain, I do not feel any actual pleaſure, I have no reaſon to judge that any ſuch thing exiſts; ſince pleaſure is only pleaſure as it is felt. The ſame may be ſaid of pain, and with equal reaſon. I can never perſuade myſelf that pleaſure and pain are mere relations, which can only exiſt as they are contraſted; but I think I can diſcern clearly that there are poſitive pains and pleaſures, which do not at all depend upon each other.

other. Nothing is more certain to my own feelings than this. There is nothing which I can diſtinguiſh in my mind with more clearneſs than the three ſtates, of indifference, of pleaſure, and of pain. Every one of theſe I can perceive without any ſort of idea of its relation to any thing elſe. Caius is afflicted with a fit of the cholic; this man is actually in pain; ſtretch Caius upon the rack, he will feel a much greater pain: but does this pain of the rack ariſe from the removal of any pleaſure? or is the fit of the cholic a pleaſure or a pain juſt as we are pleaſed to conſider it?

SECT. III.

The difference between the removal of PAIN and poſitive PLEASURE.

WE ſhall carry this propoſition yet a ſtep farther. We ſhall venture to propoſe, that pain and pleaſure

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are not only not neceſſarily dependent for their exiſtence on their mutual diminution or removal, but that, in reality, the diminution or ceaſing of pleaſure does not operate like poſitive pain; and that the removal or diminution of pain, in its effect, has very little reſemblance to poſitive pleaſure *. The former of theſe propoſitions will, I believe, be much more readily allowed than the latter; becauſe it is very evident that pleaſure, when it has run its career, ſets us down very nearly where it found us. Pleaſure of every kind quickly ſatisfies; and when it is over, we relapſe into indifference, or rather we fall into a ſoft tranquillity, which is tinged with the agreeable colour of the former ſenſation. I own it is not at firſt view ſo apparent, that the re-

* Mr. Locke [Eſſay on Human Underſtanding, l. ii. c. 20. ſect. 16.] thinks that the removal or leſſening of a pain is conſidered and operates as a pleaſure, and the loſs or diminiſhing of pleaſure as a pain. It is this opinion which we conſider here.

moval

moval of a great pain does not reſemble poſitive pleaſure; but let us recollect in what ſtate we have found our minds upon eſcaping ſome imminent danger, or on being releaſed from the ſeverity of ſome cruel pain. We have on ſuch occaſions found, if I am not much miſtaken, the temper of our minds in a tenor very remote from that which attends the preſence of poſitive pleaſure; we have found them in a ſtate of much ſobriety, impreſſed with a ſenſe of awe, in a ſort of tranquillity ſhadowed with horror. The faſhion of the countenance and the geſture of the body on ſuch occaſions is ſo correſpondent to this ſtate of mind, that any perſon, a ſtranger to the cauſe of the appearance, would rather judge us under ſome conſternation, than in the enjoyment of any thing like poſitive pleaſure.

Ως δ' οτε περ ανδρ' αλη πυκινη λαβη, ος τ' ενι παλρῳ
Φωτα καλακτεινας, αλλων εξικετο δημον,
Ανδρος ες αφνειου, θαμβος δ' εχει εισοροωντας.

Iliad. iv.

As when a wretch, who, conſcious of his crime,
Purſued for murder from his native clime,
Juſt gains ſome frontier, breathleſs, pale, amaz'd;
All gaze, all wonder!

This ſtriking appearance of the man whom Homer ſuppoſes to have juſt eſcaped an imminent danger, the ſort of mixt paſſion of terror and ſurprize, with which he affects the ſpectators, paints very ſtrongly the manner in which we find ourſelves affected upon occaſions any way ſimilar. For when we have ſuffered from any violent emotion, the mind naturally continues in ſomething like the ſame condition, after the cauſe which firſt produced it has ceaſed to operate. The toſſing of the ſea remains after the ſtorm; and when this remain of horror has entirely ſubſided, all the paſſion, which the accident raiſed, ſubſides along with it; and the mind returns to its uſual ſtate of indifference. In ſhort, pleaſure (I mean any thing either in the

inward

inward ſenſation, or in the outward appearance, like pleaſure from a poſitive cauſe) has never, I imagine, its origin from the removal of pain or danger.

SECT. IV.

Of DELIGHT and PLEASURE, as oppoſed to each other.

BUT ſhall we therefore ſay, that the removal of pain or its diminution is always ſimply painful? or affirm that the ceſſation or the leſſening of pleaſure is always attended itſelf with a pleaſure? By no means. What I advance is no more than this; firſt, that there are pleaſures and pains of a poſitive and independent nature; and ſecondly, that the feeling which reſults from the ceaſing or diminution of pain does not bear a ſufficient reſemblance to poſitive pleaſure, to have it conſidered as of the ſame nature, or to entitle it to be known by

the ſame name; and thirdly, that upon the ſame principle the removal or qualification of pleaſure has no reſemblance to poſitive pain. It is certain that the former feeling (the removal or moderation of pain) has ſomething in it far from diſtreſſing or diſagreeable in its nature. This feeling, in many caſes ſo agreeable, but in all ſo different from poſitive pleaſure, has no name which I know; but that hinders not its being a very real one, and very different from all others. It is moſt certain, that every ſpecies of ſatisfaction or pleaſure, how different ſoever in its manner of affecting, is of a poſitive nature in the mind of him who feels it. The affection is undoubtedly poſitive; but the cauſe may be, as in this caſe it certainly is, a ſort of *Privation*. And it is very reaſonable that we ſhould diſtinguiſh by ſome term two things ſo diſtinct in nature, as a pleaſure that is ſuch ſimply, and without any relation, from that pleaſure which cannot exiſt without a

relation,

relation, and that too a relation to pain. Very extraordinary it would be, if theſe affections, ſo diſtinguiſhable in their cauſes, ſo different in their effects, ſhould be confounded with each other, becauſe vulgar uſe has ranged them under the ſame general title. Whenever I have occaſion to ſpeak of this ſpecies of relative pleaſure, I call it *Delight*; and I ſhall take the beſt care I can, to uſe that word in no other ſenſe. I am ſatisfied the word is not commonly uſed in this appropriated ſignification; but I thought it better to take up a word already known, and to limit its ſignification, than to introduce a new one, which would not perhaps incorporate ſo well with the language. I ſhould never have preſumed the leaſt alteration in our words, if the nature of the language, framed for the purpoſes of buſineſs rather than thoſe of philoſophy, and the nature of my ſubject, that leads me out of the common track of diſcourſe, did not in a

manner neceſſitate me to it. I ſhall make uſe of this liberty with all poſſible caution. As I make uſe of the word *Delight* to expreſs the ſenſation which accompanies the removal of pain or danger; ſo when I ſpeak of poſitive pleaſure, I ſhall for the moſt part call it ſimply *Pleaſure*.

SECT. V.

JOY and GRIEF.

IT muſt be obſerved, that the ceſſation of pleaſure affects the mind three ways. If it ſimply ceaſes, after having continued a proper time, the effect is *indifference*; if it be abruptly broken off, there enſues an uneaſy ſenſe called *diſappointment*; if the object be ſo totally loſt that there is no chance of enjoying it again, a paſſion ariſes in the mind, which is called *grief*. Now, there is none of theſe, not even grief, which is the moſt violent,

violent, that I think has any reſemblance to poſitive pain. The perſon who grieves, ſuffers his paſſion to grow upon him; he indulges it, he loves it: but this never happens in the caſe of actual pain, which no man ever willingly endured for any conſiderable time. That grief ſhould be willingly endured, though far from a ſimply pleaſing ſenſation, is not ſo difficult to be underſtood. It is the nature of grief to keep its object perpetually in its eye, to preſent it in its moſt pleaſurable views, to repeat all the circumſtances that attend it, even to the laſt minuteneſs; to go back to every particular enjoyment, to dwell upon each, and to find a thouſand new perfections in all, that were not ſufficiently underſtood before; in grief, the *pleaſure* is ſtill uppermoſt; and the affliction we ſuffer has no reſemblance to abſolute pain, which is always odious, and which we endeavour to ſhake off as ſoon as poſſible. The Odyſſey of Homer, which abounds with

ſo many natural and affecting images, has none more ſtriking than thoſe which Menelaus raiſes of the calamitous fate of his friends, and his own manner of feeling it. He owns, indeed, that he often gives himſelf ſome intermiſſion from ſuch melancholy reflections; but he obſerves too, that, melancholy as they are, they give him pleaſure.

Αλλ' εμπης φανλας μεν οδυρομενος και αχευων,
Πολλακις εν μεγαροισι καθημενος ημελεροισιν
Αλλοτε μεν τε γοῳ φρενα τερπομαι, αλλοτε δ' αυτε
Παυομαι αιψηρος δε κορος κρυεροιο γοοιο.

Still in ſhort intervals of pleaſing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
Indulge *the tribute of a* grateful *tear.*

HOM. Od. iv.

On the other hand, when we recover our health, when we eſcape an imminent danger, is it with joy that we are affect-

ed? The ſenſe on theſe occaſions is far from that ſmooth and voluptuous ſatisfaction which the aſſured proſpect of pleaſure beſtows. The delight which ariſes from the modifications of pain, confeſſes the ſtock from whence it ſprung, in its ſolid, ſtrong, and ſevere nature.

SECT. VI.

Of the paſſions which belong to SELF-PRESERVATION.

MOST of the ideas which are capable of making a powerful impreſſion on the mind, whether ſimply of Pain or Pleaſure, or of the modifications of thoſe, may be reduced very nearly to theſe two heads, *ſelf-preſervation* and *ſociety*; to the ends of one or the other of which all our paſſions are calculated to anſwer. The paſſions which concern ſelf-preſervation, turn moſtly on

pain

pain or *danger*. The ideas of *pain*, *ſickneſs*, and *death*, fill the mind with ſtrong emotions of horror; but *life* and *health*, though they put us in a capacity of being affected with pleaſure, they make no ſuch impreſſion by the ſimple enjoyment. The paſſions therefore which are converſant about the preſervation of the individual, turn chiefly on *pain* and *danger*, and they are the moſt powerful of all the paſſions.

SECT. VII.

Of the SUBLIME.

WHatever is fitted in any ſort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to ſay, whatever is in any ſort terrible, or is converſant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a ſource of the *ſublime*; that is, it is productive of the

ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. I ſay the ſtrongeſt emotion, becauſe I am ſatisfied the ideas of pain are much more powerful than thoſe which enter on the part of pleaſure. Without all doubt, the torments which we may be made to ſuffer, are much greater in their effect on the body and mind, than any pleaſures which the moſt learned voluptuary could ſuggeſt, or than the livelieſt imagination, and the moſt ſound and exquiſitely ſenſible body could enjoy. Nay, I am in great doubt whether any man could be found who would earn a life of the moſt perfect ſatisfaction, at the price of ending it in the torments, which juſtice inflicted in a few hours on the late unfortunate regicide in France. But as pain is ſtronger in its operation than pleaſure, ſo death is in general a much more affecting idea than pain; becauſe there are very few pains, however exquiſite, which are not preferred to death; nay, what generally

makes

makes pain itſelf, if I may ſay ſo, more painful, is, that it is conſidered as an emiſſary of this king of terrors. When danger or pain preſs too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are ſimply terrible; but at certain diſtances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are delightful, as we every day experience. The cauſe of this I ſhall endeavour to inveſtigate hereafter.

SECT. VIII.

Of the paſſions which belong to SOCIETY.

THE other head under which I claſs our paſſions, is that of *ſociety*, which may be divided into two ſorts. 1. The ſociety of the *ſexes*, which anſwers the purpoſes of propagation; and next, that more *general ſociety*, which we have with men and with other animals, and which we may in ſome ſort

be

be ſaid to have even with the inanimate world. The paſſions belonging to the preſervation of the individual, turn wholly on pain and danger: thoſe which belong to *generation*, have their origin in gratifications and *pleaſures*; the pleaſure moſt directly belonging to this purpoſe is of a lively character, rapturous and violent, and confeſſedly the higheſt pleaſure of ſenſe; yet the abſence of this ſo great an enjoyment, ſcarce amounts to an uneaſineſs; and, except at particular times, I do not think it affects at all. When men deſcribe in what manner they are affected by pain and danger, they do not dwell on the pleaſure of health and the comfort of ſecurity, and then lament the *loſs* of theſe ſatisfactions: the whole turns upon the actual pains and horrors which they endure. But if you liſten to the complaints of a forſaken lover, you obſerve that he inſiſts largely on the pleaſures which he enjoyed or hoped to enjoy, and on the perfection of the object of his deſires;

ſires; it is the *loſs* which is always uppermoſt in his mind. The violent effects produced by love, which has ſometimes been even wrought up to madneſs, is no objection to the rule which we ſeek to eſtabliſh. When men have ſuffered their imaginations to be long affected with any idea, it ſo wholly engroſſes them as to ſhut out by degrees almoſt every other, and to break down every partition of the mind which would confine it. Any idea is ſufficient for the purpoſe, as is evident from the infinite variety of cauſes, which give riſe to madneſs; but this at moſt can only prove that the paſſion of love is capable of producing very extraordinary effects, not that its extraordinary emotions have any connection with poſitive pain.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

The final cauſe of the difference between the paſſions belonging to SELF-PRESERVATION, and thoſe which regard the SOCIETY of the SEXES.

THE final cauſe of the difference in character between the paſſions which regard ſelf-preſervation and thoſe which are directed to the multiplication of the ſpecies, will illuſtrate the foregoing remarks yet further; and it is, I imagine, worthy of obſervation even upon its own account. As the performance of our duties of every kind depends upon life, and the performing them with vigour and efficacy depends upon health, we are very ſtrongly affected with whatever threatens the deſtruction of either: but as we were not made to acquieſce in life and health, the ſimple enjoyment of them is not attended with any

real

real pleaſure, leſt, ſatisfied with that, we ſhould give ourſelves over to indolence and inaction. On the other hand, the generation of mankind is a great purpoſe, and it is requiſite that men ſhould be animated to the purſuit of it by ſome great incentive. It is therefore attended with a very high pleaſure; but as it is by no means deſigned to be our conſtant buſineſs, it is not fit that the abſence of this pleaſure ſhould be attended with any conſiderable pain. The difference between men and brutes in this point, ſeems to be remarkable. Men are at all times pretty equally diſpoſed to the pleaſures of love, becauſe they are to be guided by reaſon in the time and manner of indulging them. Had any great pain ariſen from the want of this ſatisfaction, reaſon, I am afraid, would find great difficulties in the performance of its office. But brutes, who obey laws in the execution of which their own reaſon has but little ſhare, have their ſtated

ſeaſons;

ſeaſon; at ſuch times it is not improbable that the ſenſation from the want is very troubleſome, becauſe the end muſt be then anſwered, or be miſſed in many, perhaps for ever; as the inclination returns only with its ſeaſon.

SECT. X.

Of BEAUTY.

THE paſſion which belongs to generation, merely as ſuch, is luſt only. This is evident in brutes, whoſe paſſions are more unmixed, and which purſue their purpoſes more directly than ours. The only diſtinction they obſerve with regard to their mates, is that of ſex. It is true, that they ſtick ſeverally to their own ſpecies in preference to all others. But this preference, I imagine, does not ariſe from any ſenſe of beauty which they find in their ſpecies, as Mr. Addiſon ſuppoſes, but from a law of ſome

other kind, to which they are ſubject; and this we may fairly conclude, from their apparent want of choice amongſt thoſe objects to which the barriers of their ſpecies have confined them. But man, who is a creature adapted to a greater variety and intricacy of relation, connects with the general paſſion, the idea of ſome *ſocial* qualities, which direct and heighten the appetite which he has in common with all other animals; and as he is not deſigned like them to live at large, it is fit that he ſhould have ſomething to create a preference, and fix his choice; and this in general ſhould be ſome ſenſible quality; as no other can ſo quickly, ſo powerfully, or ſo ſurely produce its effect. The object therefore of this mixed paſſion, which we call love, is the *beauty* of the *ſex*. Men are carried to the ſex in general, as it is the ſex, and by the common law of nature; but they are attached to particulars by perſonal *beauty*. I call beauty a ſocial qualily;

for

for where women and men, and not only they, but when other animals give us a ſenſe of joy and pleaſure in beholding them (and there are many that do ſo), they inſpire us with ſentiments of tenderneſs and affection towards their perſons; we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unleſs we ſhould have ſtrong reaſons to the contrary. But to what end, in many caſes, this was deſigned, I am unable to diſcover; for I ſee no greater reaſon for a connection between man and ſeveral animals who are attired in ſo engaging a manner, than between him and ſome others who entirely want this attraction, or poſſeſs it in a far weaker degree. But it is probable, that Providence did not make even this diſtinction, but with a view to ſome great end, though we cannot perceive diſtinctly what it is, as his wiſdom is not our wiſdom, nor our ways his ways.

SECT. XI.

SOCIETY and SOLITUDE.

THE ſecond branch of the ſocial paſſions is that which adminiſters to *ſociety in general*. With regard to this, I obſerve, that ſociety, merely as ſociety, without any particular heightenings, gives us no poſitive pleaſure in the enjoyment; but abſolute and entire *ſolitude*, that is, the total and perpetual excluſion from all ſociety, is as great a poſitive pain as can almoſt be conceived. Therefore in the balance between the pleaſure of general *ſociety*, and the pain of abſolute ſolitude, *pain* is the predominant idea. But the pleaſure of any particular ſocial enjoyment outweighs very conſiderably the uneaſineſs cauſed by the want of that particular enjoyment; ſo that the ſtrongeſt ſenſations relative to the habitudes of *particular ſociety*, are ſenſations of pleaſure. Good company, lively converſations,

verſations, and the endearments of friendſhip, fill the mind with great pleaſure; a temporary ſolitude, on the other hand, is itſelf agreeable. This may perhaps prove that we are creatures deſigned for contemplation as well as action; ſince ſolitude as well as ſociety has its pleaſures; as from the former obſervation we may diſcern, that an entire life of ſolitude contradicts the purpoſes of our being, ſince death itſelf is ſcarcely an idea of more terror.

SECT. XII.

SYMPATHY, IMITATION, and AMBITION.

UNDER this denomination of ſociety, the paſſions are of a complicated kind, and branch out into a variety of forms agreeable to that variety of ends they are to ſerve in the great chain of ſociety. The three principal links in this chain are *ſympathy*, *imitation*, and *ambition*.

SECT. XIII.

SYMPATHY.

IT is by the firſt of theſe paſſions that we enter into the concerns of others; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never ſuffered to be indifferent ſpectators of almoſt any thing which men can do or ſuffer. For ſympathy muſt be conſidered as a ſort of ſubſtitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many reſpects as he is affected: ſo that this paſſion may either partake of the nature of thoſe which regard ſelf-preſervation, and turning upon pain may be a ſource of the ſublime; or it may turn upon ideas of pleaſure; and then whatever has been ſaid of the ſocial affections, whether they regard ſociety in general, or only ſome particular modes of it, may be applicable here. It is by this principle chiefly that

poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuſe their paſſions from one breaſt to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedneſs, miſery, and death itſelf. It is a common obſervation, that objects which in the reality would ſhock, are in tragical, and ſuch like repreſentations, the ſource of a very high ſpecies of pleaſure. This taken as a fact, has been the cauſe of much reaſoning. The ſatisfaction has been commonly attributed, firſt, to the comfort we receive in conſidering that ſo melancholy a ſtory is no more than a fiction; and next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we ſee repreſented. I am afraid it is a practice much too common in enquiries of this nature, to attribute the cauſe of feelings which merely ariſe from the mechanical ſtructure of our bodies, or from the natural frame and conſtitution of our minds, to certain concluſions of the reaſoning faculty on the objects preſented to

us; for I ſhould imagine, that the influence of reaſon in producing our paſſions is nothing near ſo extenſive as it is commonly believed.

SECT. XIV.

The effects of SYMPATY in the diſtreſſes of others.

TO examine this point concerning the effect of tragedy in a proper manner, we muſt previouſly conſider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumſtances of real diſtreſs. I am convinced we have a degree of delight, and that no ſmall one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others; for let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us ſhun ſome objects, if on the contrary it induces us to approach them, if it makes us dwell upon them, in this caſe I conceive we muſt have a delight or

pleaſure

pleaſure of ſome ſpecies or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic hiſtories of ſcenes of this nature with as much pleaſure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The proſperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can ſo agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the ſtate of Macedon, and the diſtreſs of its unhappy prince. Such a cataſtrophe touches us in hiſtory as much as the deſtruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight, in caſes of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the ſufferer be ſome excellent perſon who ſinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cauſe he adhered to, than with the deſerved triumphs and uninterrupted proſperity of the other; for terror is a paſſion which always produces delight when

it

it does not preſs too cloſe; and pity is a paſſion accompanied with pleaſure, becauſe it ariſes from love and ſocial affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpoſe, the paſſion which animates us to it, is attended with delight, or a pleaſure of ſome kind, let the ſubject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has deſigned we ſhould be united by the bond of ſympathy, he has ſtrengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there moſt where our ſympathy is moſt wanted, in the diſtreſſes of others. If this paſſion was ſimply painful, we would ſhun with the greateſt care all perſons and places that could excite ſuch a paſſion; as ſome, who are ſo far gone in indolence as not to endure any ſtrong impreſſion, actually do. But the caſe is widely different with the greater part of mankind; there is no ſpectacle we ſo eagerly purſue, as that of ſome uncommon and grievous calamity; ſo that

whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in hiſtory, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no ſmall uneaſineſs. The delight we have in ſuch things, hinders us from ſhunning ſcenes of miſery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourſelves in relieving thoſe who ſuffer; and all this antecedent to any reaſoning, by an inſtinct that works us to its own purpoſes without our concurrence.

SECT. XV.

Of the effects of TRAGEDY.

IT is thus in real calamities. In imitated diſtreſſes the only difference is the pleaſure reſulting from the effects of imitation; for it is never ſo perfect, but we can perceive it is imitation, and on that principle are ſomewhat pleaſed with it. And indeed in ſome caſes we derive

as

as much or more pleaſure from that ſource than from the thing itſelf. But then I imagine we ſhall be much miſtaken if we attribute any conſiderable part of our ſatisfaction in tragedy to the conſideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its repreſentations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power. But be its power of what kind it will, it never approaches to what it repreſents. Chooſe a day on which to repreſent the moſt ſublime and affecting tragedy we have; appoint the moſt favourite actors; ſpare no coſt upon the ſcenes and decorations; unite the greateſt efforts of poetry, painting, and muſic; and when you have collected your audience, juſt at the moment when their minds are erect with expectation, let it be reported that a ſtate criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining ſquare; in a moment the emptineſs of the thea-

tre

tre would demonſtrate the comparative weakneſs of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real ſympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a ſimple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the repreſentation, ariſes from hence, that we do not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh what we would by no means chooſe to do, from what we ſhould be eager enough to ſee if it was once done. We delight in ſeeing things, which ſo far from doing, our heartieſt wiſhes would be to ſee redreſſed. This noble capital, the pride of England and of Europe, I believe no man is ſo ſtrangely wicked as to deſire to ſee deſtroyed by a conflagration or an earthquake, though he ſhould be removed himſelf to the greateſt diſtance from the danger. But ſuppoſe ſuch a fatal accident to have happened, what numbers from all parts would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongſt them many who would have been content never to have ſeen London in its glory! Nor is it, either in

real

real or fictitious diſtreſſes, our immunity from them which produces our delight; in my own mind I can diſcover nothing like it. I apprehend that this miſtake is owing to a ſort of ſophiſm, by which we are frequently impoſed upon; it ariſes from our not diſtinguiſhing between what is indeed a neceſſary condition to our doing or ſuffering any thing in general, and what is the *cauſe* of ſome particular act. If a man kills me with a ſword, it is a neceſſary condition to this that we ſhould have been both of us alive before the fact; and yet it would be abſurd to ſay, that our being both living creatures was the cauſe of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is abſolutely neceſſary my life ſhould be out of any imminent hazard, before I can take a delight in the ſufferings of others, real or imaginary, or indeed in any thing elſe from any cauſe whatſoever. But then it is a ſophiſm to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cauſe of my delight either on theſe

or on any occaſions. No one can diſtinguiſh ſuch a cauſe of ſatisfaction in his own mind, I believe; nay, when we do not ſuffer any very acute pain, nor are expoſed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others, whilſt we ſuffer ourſelves; and often then moſt when we are ſoftened by affliction; we ſee with pity even diſtreſſes which we would accept in the place of our own.

SECT. XVI.

IMITATION.

THE ſecond paſſion belonging to ſociety is imitation, or if you will, a deſire of imitating, and conſequently a pleaſure in it. This paſſion ariſes from much the ſame cauſe with ſympathy. For as ſympathy makes us take a concern in whatever men feel, ſo this affection prompts us to copy whatever they do; and conſequently we have a plea-

a pleaſure in imitating, and in whatever belongs to imitation merely as it is ſuch, without any intervention of the reaſoning faculty; but ſolely from our natural conſtitution, which Providence has framed in ſuch a manner as to find either pleaſure or delight, according to the nature of the object, in whatever regards the purpoſes of our being. It is by imitation, far more than by precept, that we learn every thing; and what we learn thus, we acquire not only more effectually, but more pleaſantly. This forms our manners, our opinions, our lives. It is one of the ſtrongeſt links of ſociety; it is a ſpecies of mutual compliance, which all men yield to each other, without conſtraint to themſelves, and which is extremely flattering to all. Herein it is that painting and many other agreeable arts have laid one of the principal foundations of their power. And ſince, by its influence on our manners and our paſſions, it is of ſuch great conſequence, I

ſhall

ſhall here venture to lay down a rule, which may inform us with a good degree of certainty when we are to attribute the power of the arts to imitation, or to our pleaſure in the ſkill of the imitator merely, and when to ſympathy, or ſome other cauſe in conjunction with it. When the object repreſented in poetry or painting is ſuch as we could have no deſire of ſeeing in the reality, then I may be ſure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation, and to no cauſe operating in the thing itſelf. So it is with moſt of the pieces which the painters call ſtill-life. In theſe a cottage, a dunghill, the meaneſt and moſt ordinary utenſils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleaſure. But when the object of the painting or poem is ſuch as we ſhould run to ſee if real, let it affect us with what odd ſort of ſenſe it will, we may rely upon it, that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itſelf than to the mere

effect of imitation, or to a conſideration of the ſkill of the imitator, however excellent. Ariſtotle has ſpoken ſo much and ſo ſolidly upon the force of imitation in his poetics, that it makes any further diſcourſe upon this ſubject the leſs neceſſary.

SECT. XVII.

AMBITION.

ALTHOUGH imitation is one of the great inſtruments uſed by Providence in bringing our nature towards its perfection, yet if men gave themſelves up to imitation entirely, and each followed the other, and ſo on in an eternal circle, it is eaſy to ſee that there never could be any improvement amongſt them. Men muſt remain as brutes do, the ſame at the end that they are at this day, and that they were in the beginning of the world. To prevent this, God has planted in man

a ſenſe

a ſenſe of ambition, and a ſatisfaction ariſing from the contemplation of his excelling his fellows in ſomething deemed valuable amongſt them. It is this paſſion that drives men to all the ways we ſee in uſe of ſignalizing themſelves, and that tends to make whatever excites in a man the idea of this diſtinction ſo very pleaſant. It has been ſo ſtrong as to make very miſerable men take comfort, that they were ſupreme in miſery; and certain it is, that where we cannot diſtinguiſh ourſelves by ſomething excellent, we begin to take a complacency in ſome ſingular infirmities, follies, or defects of one kind or other. It is on this principle that flattery is ſo prevalent; for flattery is no more than what raiſes in a man's mind an idea of a preference which he has not. Now, whatever, either on good or upon bad grounds, tends to raiſe a man in his own opinion, produces a ſort of ſwelling and triumph, that is extremely grateful to the human mind;

and this ſwelling is never more perceived, nor operates with more force, than when without danger we are converſant with terrible objects, the mind always claiming to itſelf ſome part of the dignity and importance of the things which it contemplates. Hence proceeds what Longinus has obſerved of that glorying and ſenſe of inward greatneſs, that always fills the reader of ſuch paſſages in poets and orators as are ſublime; it is what every man muſt have felt in himſelf upon ſuch occaſions.

SECT. XVIII.

The RECAPITULATION.

TO draw the whole of what has been ſaid into a few diſtinct points; The paſſions which belong to ſelf-preſervation, turn on pain and danger; they are ſimply painful when their cauſes immediately affect us; they are delightful when

when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in ſuch circumſtances; this delight I have not called pleaſure, becauſe it turns on pain, and becauſe it is different enough from any idea of poſitive pleaſure. Whatever excites this delight, I call *ſublime*. The paſſions belonging to ſelf-preſervation are the ſtrongeſt of all the paſſions.

The ſecond head to which the paſſions are referred with relation to their final cauſe, is ſociety. There are two ſorts of ſocieties. The firſt is, the ſociety of ſex. The paſſion belonging to this is called love, and it contains a mixture of luſt; its object is the beauty of women. The other is the great ſociety with man and all other animals. The paſſion ſubſervient to this is called likewiſe love, but it has no mixture of luſt, and its object is beauty; which is a name I ſhall apply to all ſuch qualities in things as induce in us a ſenſe of affection and tenderneſs, or ſome other paſſion the moſt nearly reſembling

bling theſe. The paſſion of love has its riſe in poſitive pleaſure; it is, like all things which grow out of pleaſure, capable of being mixed with a mode of uneaſineſs, that is, when an idea of its object is excited in the mind with an idea at the ſame time of having irretrievably loſt it. This mixed ſenſe of pleaſure I have not called *pain*, becauſe it turns upon actual pleaſure, and becauſe it is, both in its cauſe and in moſt of its effects, of a nature altogether different.

Next to the general paſſion we have for ſociety, to a choice in which we are directed by the pleaſure we have in the object, the particular paſſion under this head called ſympathy has the greateſt extent. The nature of this paſſion is, to put us in the place of another in whatever circumſtance he is in, and to affect us in a like manner; ſo that this paſſion may, as the occaſion requires, turn either on pain or pleaſure; but with the modifications mentioned in ſome caſes in ſect. 11.

As to imitation and preference, nothing more need be ſaid.

SECT. XIX.

The CONCLUSION.

I Believe that an attempt to range and methodize ſome of our moſt leading paſſions, would be a good preparative to ſuch an enquiry as we are going to make in the enſuing diſcourſe. The paſſions I have mentioned are almoſt the only ones which it can be neceſſary to conſider in our preſent deſign; though the variety of the paſſions is great, and worthy in every branch of that variety of an attentive inveſtigation. The more accurately we ſearch into the human mind, the ſtronger traces we every where find of his wiſdom who made it. If a diſcourſe on the uſe of the parts of the body may be conſidered as an hymn to the Creator; the uſe of the paſſions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren

of praiſe to him, nor unproductive to ourſelves of that noble and uncommon union of ſcience and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wiſdom alone can afford to a rational mind; whilſt, referring to him whatever we find of right or good or fair in ourſelves, diſcovering his ſtrength and wiſdom even in our own weakneſs and imperfection, honouring them where we diſcover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are loſt in our ſearch, we may be inquiſitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I may dare to ſay ſo, into the counſels of the Almighty by a conſideration of his works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our ſtudies, which if they do not in ſome meaſure effect, they are of very little ſervice to us. But, beſides this great purpoſe, a conſideration of the rationale of our paſſions ſeems to me very neceſſary for all who would affect them

upon ſolid and ſure principles. It is not enough to know them in general: to affect them after a delicate manner, or to judge properly of any work deſigned to affect them, we ſhould know the exact boundaries of their ſeveral juriſdictions; we ſhould purſue them through all their variety of operations, and pierce into the inmoſt, and what might appear inacceſſible parts of our nature,

Quod latet arcanâ non enarrabile fibrâ.

Without all this it is poſſible for a man, after a confuſed manner, ſometimes to ſatisfy his own mind of the truth of his work; but he can never have a certain determinate rule to go by, nor can he ever make his propoſitions ſufficiently clear to others. Poets, and orators, and painters, and thoſe who cultivate other branches of the liberal arts, have without this critical know-

ledge ſucceeded well in their ſeveral provinces, and will ſucceed; as among artificers there are many machines made and even invented without any exact knowledge of the principles they are governed by. It is, I own, not uncommon to be wrong in theory and right in practice; and we are happy that it is ſo. Men often act right from their feelings, who afterwards reaſon but ill on them from principle; but as it is impoſſible to avoid an attempt at ſuch reaſoning, and equally impoſſible to prevent its having ſome influence on our practice, ſurely it is worth taking ſome pains to have it juſt, and founded on the baſis of ſure experience. We might expect that the artiſts themſelves would have been our ſureſt guides; but the artiſts have been too much occupied in the practice: the philoſophers have done little; and what they have done, was moſtly with a view to their own ſchemes and ſyſtems:

and as for thoſe called critics, they have generally ſought the rule of the arts in the wrong place; they ſought it among poems, pictures, engravings, ſtatues, and buildings. But art can never give the rules that make an art. This is, I believe, the reaſon why artiſts in general, and poets principally, have been confined in ſo narrow a circle; they have been rather imitators of one another than of nature; and this with ſo faithful an uniformity, and to ſo remote an antiquity, that it is hard to ſay who gave the firſt model. Critics follow them, and therefore can do little as guides. I can judge but poorly of any thing, whilſt I meaſure it by no other ſtandard than itſelf. The true ſtandard of the arts is in every man's power; and an eaſy obſervation of the moſt common, ſometimes of the meaneſt things in nature, will give the trueſt lights, where the greateſt ſagacity and induſtry that flights

ſuch

ſuch obſervation, muſt leave us in the dark, or, what is worſe, amuſe and miſlead us by falſe lights. In an enquiry it is almoſt every thing to be once in a right road. I am ſatisfied I have done but little by theſe obſervations conſidered in themſelves; and I never ſhould have taken the pains to digeſt them, much leſs ſhould I have ever ventured to publiſh them, if I was not convinced that nothing tends more to the corruption of ſcience than to ſuffer it to ſtagnate. Theſe waters muſt be troubled before they can exert their virtues. A man who works beyond the ſurface of things, though he may be wrong himſelf, yet he clears the way for others, and may chance to make even his errors ſubſervient to the cauſe of truth. In the following parts I ſhall enquire what things they are that cauſe in us the affections of the ſublime and beautiful, as in this I have conſidered the affections themſelves. I only deſire one favour,

that

that no part of this diſcourſe may be judged of by itſelf, and independently of the reſt; for I am ſenſible I have not diſpoſed my materials to abide the teſt of a captious controverſy, but of a ſober and even forgiving examination; that they are not armed at all points for battle, but dreſſed to viſit thoſe who are willing to give a peaceful entrance to truth.

The End of the Firſt Part.

A Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

PART II.

SECT. I.

Of the paſſion cauſed by the SUBLIME.

THE paſſion cauſed by the great and ſublime in *nature*, when thoſe cauſes operate moſt powerfully, is aſtoniſhment; and aſtoniſhment is that ſtate of the ſoul, in which all its motions are ſuſpended, with ſome degree of horror *. In this caſe the mind is ſo entirely filled

* Part I. ſect. 3, 4, 7.

with

with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it. Hence arises the great power of the sublime, that, far from being produced by them, it anticipates our reasonings, and hurries us on by an irresistible force. Astonishment, as I have said, is the effect of the sublime in its highest degree; the inferior effects are admiration, reverence, and respect.

SECT. II.

TERROR.

NO passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear. * For fear being an apprehension of pain or death, it operates in a manner that resembles actual pain. Whatever therefore is terrible, with regard to sight, is sublime too, whether

* Part IV. sect. 3, 4, 5, 6.

this

this cauſe of terror, be endued with greatneſs of dimenſions or not; for it is impoſſible to look on any thing as trifling, or contemptible, that may be dangerous. There are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raiſing ideas of the ſublime, becauſe they are conſidered as objects of terror; as ſerpents and poiſonous animals of almoſt all kinds. And to things of great dimenſions, if we annex an adventitious idea of terror, they become without compariſon greater. A level plain of a vaſt extent on land, is certainly no mean idea; the proſpect of ſuch a plain may be as extenſive as a proſpect of the ocean: but can it ever fill the mind with any thing ſo great as the ocean itſelf? This is owing to ſeveral cauſes; but it is owing to none more than this, that this ocean is an object of no ſmall terror. Indeed terror is in all caſes whatſoever, either more openly or latently, the ruling principle of the ſublime. Several languages bear

a ſtrong teſtimony to the affinity of theſe ideas. They frequently uſe the ſame word, to ſignify indifferently the modes of aſtoniſhment or admiration and thoſe of terror. Θαμβος is in Greek, either fear or wonder; δεινος is terrible or reſpectable; αιδεω, to reverence or to fear. *Vereor* in Latin, is what αιδεω is in Greek. The Romans uſed the verb *ſtupeo*, a term which ſtrongly marks the ſtate of an aſtoniſhed mind, to expreſs the effect either of ſimple fear, or of aſtoniſhment; the word *attonitus* (thunder-ſtruck) is equally expreſſive of the alliance of theſe ideas; and do not the French *etonnement*, and the Engliſh *aſtoniſhment* and *amazement*, point out as clearly the kindred emotions which attend fear and wonder? They who have a more general knowledge of languages, could produce, I make no doubt, many other and equally ſtriking examples.

SECT.

SECT. III.

OBSCURITY.

TO make any thing very terrible, obſcurity* ſeems in general to be neceſſary. When we know the full extent of any danger, when we can accuſtom our eyes to it, a great deal of the apprehenſion vaniſhes. Every one will be ſenſible of this, who conſiders how greatly night adds to our dread, in all caſes of danger, and how much the notions of ghoſts and goblins, of which none can form clear ideas, affect minds which give credit to the popular tales concerning ſuch ſorts of beings. Thoſe deſpotic governments, which are founded on the paſſions of men, and principally upon the paſſion of fear, keep their chief as much as may be from the public eye. The policy has been the ſame in many

* Part IV. ſect. 14, 15, 16.

caſes of religion. Almoſt all the heathen temples were dark. Even in the barbarous temples of the Americans at this day, they keep their idol in a dark part of the hut, which is conſecrated to his worſhip. For this purpoſe too the druids performed all their ceremonies in the boſom of the darkeſt woods, and in the ſhade of the oldeſt and moſt ſpreading oaks. No perſon ſeems better to have underſtood the ſecret of heightening, or of ſetting terrible things, if I may uſe the expreſſion, in their ſtrongeſt light, by the force of a judicious obſcurity, than Milton. His deſcription of death in the ſecond book is admirably ſtudied; it is aſtoniſhing with what a gloomy pomp, with what a ſignificant and expreſſive uncertainty of ſtrokes and colouring, he has finiſhed the portrait of the king of terrors:

The other ſhape,
If ſhape it might be call'd that ſhape had none
Diſtinguiſhable, in member, joint, or limb;

Or

Or ſubſtance might be call'd that ſhadow ſeem'd,
For each ſeem'd either; black he ſtood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And ſhook a deadly dart. What ſeem'd his head
The likeneſs of a kingly crown had on.

In this deſcription all is dark, uncertain, confuſed, terrible, and ſublime to the laſt degree.

SECT. IV.

Of the difference between CLEARNESS and OBSCURITY with regard to the paſſions.

IT is one thing to make an idea clear, and another to make it affecting to the imagination. If I make a drawing of a palace, or a temple, or a landſcape, I preſent a very clear idea of thoſe objects; but then (allowing for the effect of imitation, which is ſomething) my picture can at moſt affect only as the palace,

temple, or landſcape, would have affected in the reality. On the other hand, the moſt lively and ſpirited verbal deſcription I can give, raiſes a very obſcure and imperfect *idea* of ſuch objects; but then it is in my power to raiſe a ſtronger *emotion* by the deſcription than I could do by the beſt painting. This experience conſtantly evinces. The proper manner of conveying the *affections* of the mind from one to another, is by words; there is a great inſufficiency in all other methods of communication; and ſo far is a clearneſs of imagery from being abſolutely neceſſary to an influence upon the paſſions, that they may be conſiderably operated upon, without preſenting any image at all, by certain ſounds adapted to that purpoſe; of which we have a ſufficient proof in the acknowledged and powerful effects of inſtrumental muſic. In reality, a great clearneſs helps but little towards affecting the paſſions, as it is in

ſome

ſome ſort an enemy to all enthuſiaſms whatſoever.

SECT. [IV.]

The ſame ſubject continued.

THERE are two verſes in Horace's art of poetry that ſeem to contradict this opinion, for which reaſon I ſhall take a little more pains in clearing it up. The verſes are,

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aures,
Quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus.

On this the Abbé du Bos founds a criticiſm, wherein he gives painting the preference to poetry, in the article of moving the paſſions; principally on account of the greater *clearneſs* of the ideas it repreſents. I believe this excellent judge was led into this miſtake (if it be a miſtake) by his ſyſtem, to which he found it more conformable than I

imagine it will be found by experience. I know ſeveral who admire and love painting, and yet who regard the objects of their admiration in that art with coolneſs enough in compariſon of that warmth with which they are animated by affecting pieces of poetry or rhetoric. Among the common ſort of people, I never could perceive that painting had much influence on their paſſions. It is true, that the beſt ſorts of painting, as well as the beſt ſorts of poetry, are not much underſtood in that ſphere. But it is moſt certain, that their paſſions are very ſtrongly rouſed by a fanatic preacher, or by the ballads of Chevy-chaſe, or the children in the wood, and by other little popular poems and tales that are current in that rank of life. I do not know of any paintings, bad or good, that produce the ſame effect. So that poetry, with all its obſcurity, has a more general, as well as a more powerful dominion over the paſſions than the other art.

And I think there are reaſons in nature, why the obſcure idea, when properly conveyed, ſhould be more affecting than the clear. It is our ignorance of things that cauſes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our paſſions. Knowledge and acquaintance makes the moſt ſtriking cauſes affect but little. It is thus with the vulgar; and all men are as the vulgar in what they do not underſtand. The ideas of eternity, and infinity, are among the moſt affecting we have; and perhaps there is nothing of which we really underſtand ſo little, as of infinity, and eternity. We do not any where meet a more ſublime deſcription than this juſtly celebrated one of Milton, wherein he gives the portrait of Satan with a dignity ſo ſuitable to the ſubject:

He above the reſt
In ſhape and geſture proudly eminent
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not loſt
All her original brightneſs, nor appear'd

Leſs than archangel ruin'd, and th' exceſs
Of glory obſcur'd: as when the ſun new ris'n
Looks through the horizontal miſty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon
In dim eclipſe diſaſtrous twilight ſheds
On half the nations; and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.

Here is a very noble picture; and in what does this poetical picture conſiſt? in images of a tower, an archangel, the ſun riſing through miſts, or in an eclipſe, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolutions of kingdoms. The mind is hurried out of itſelf, by a crowd of great and confuſed images; which affect becauſe they are crowded and confuſed. For ſeparate them, and you loſe much of the greatneſs; and join them, and you infallibly loſe the clearneſs. The images raiſed by poetry are always of this obſcure kind; though in general the effects of poetry are by no means to be attributed to the images it raiſes; which point we

ſhall examine more at large hereafter *. But painting, when we have allowed for the pleaſure of imitation, can only affect ſimply by the images it preſents; and even in painting, a judicious obſcurity in ſome things contributes to the effect of the picture; becauſe the images in painting are exactly ſimilar to thoſe in nature; and in nature dark, confuſed, uncertain images have a greater power on the fancy to form the grander paſſions, than thoſe have which are more clear and determinate. But where and when this obſervation may be applied to practice, and how far it ſhall be extended, will be better deduced from the nature of the ſubject, and from the occaſion, than from any rules that can be given.

I am ſenſible that this idea has met with oppoſition, and is likely ſtill to be rejected by ſeveral. But let it be conſidered, that hardly any thing can ſtrike the mind with its greatneſs, which does not make ſome ſort of approach towards infinity; which

* Part V.

nothing

nothing can do whilſt we are able to perceive its bounds; but to ſee an object diſtinctly, and to perceive its bounds, is one and the ſame thing. A clear idea is therefore another name for a little idea. There is a paſſage in the book of Job amazingly ſublime, and this ſublimity is principally due to the terrible uncertainty of the thing deſcribed: *In thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to ſhake. Then a ſpirit paſſed before my face. The hair of my fleſh ſtood up. It ſtood ſtill,* but I could not diſcern the form thereof; *an image was before mine eyes; there was ſilence; and I heard a voice,—Shall mortal man be more juſt than God?* We are firſt prepared with the utmoſt ſolemnity for the viſion; we are firſt terrified, before we are let even into the obſcure cauſe of our emotion: but when this grand cauſe of terror makes its appearance, what is it? is it not wrapt up in the ſhades of its own incom-

incomprehenſible darkneſs, more aweful, more ſtriking, more terrible, than the livelieſt deſcription, than the cleareſt painting, could poſſibly repreſent it? When painters have attempted to give us clear repreſentations of theſe very fanciful and terrible ideas, they have, I think, almoſt always failed; inſomuch that I have been at a loſs, in all the pictures I have ſeen of hell, whether the painter did not intend ſomething ludicrous. Several painters have handled a ſubject of this kind with a view of aſſembling as many horrid phantoms as their imaginations could ſuggeſt; but all the deſigns I have chanced to meet of the temptations of St. Anthony, were rather a ſort of odd wild groteſques, than any thing capable of producing a ſerious paſſion. In all theſe ſubjects poetry is very happy. Its apparitions, its chimeras, its harpies, its allegorical figures, are grand and affecting; and though Virgil's Fame, and Homer's Diſcord, are obſcure, they are magni-

magnificent figures. Theſe figures in painting would be clear enough, but I fear they might become ridiculous.

SECT. V.

POWER.

BESIDES theſe things which *directly* ſuggeſt the idea of danger, and thoſe which produce a ſimilar effect from a mechanical cauſe, I know of nothing ſublime, which is not ſome modification of power. And this branch riſes as naturally as the other two branches, from terror, the common ſtock of every thing that is ſublime. The idea of power, at firſt view, ſeems of the claſs of theſe indifferent ones, which may equally belong to pain or to pleaſure. But in reality, the affection ariſing from the idea of vaſt power, is extremely remote from that neutral character. For firſt, we muſt remember, * that the idea of pain,

* Part I. ſect. 7.

in

in its higheſt degree, is much ſtronger than the higheſt degree of pleaſure; and that it preſerves the ſame ſuperiority through all the ſubordinate gradations. From hence it is, that where the chances for equal degrees of ſuffering or enjoyment are in any ſort equal, the idea of the ſuffering muſt always be prevalent. And indeed the ideas of pain, and above all of death, are ſo very affecting, that whilſt we remain in the preſence of whatever is ſuppoſed to have the power of inflicting either, it is impoſſible to be perfectly free from terror. Again, we know by experience, that for the enjoyment of pleaſure, no great efforts of power are at all neceſſary; nay, we know, that ſuch efforts would go a great way towards deſtroying our ſatisfaction; for pleaſure muſt be ſtolen, and not forced upon us; pleaſure follows the will; and therefore we are generally affected with it by many things of a force greatly inferior to our own. But pain is always inflicted by a

power

power in ſome way ſuperior, becauſe we never ſubmit to pain willingly. So that ſtrength, violence, pain, and terror, are ideas that ruſh in upon the mind together. Look at a man, or any other animal of prodigious ſtrength, and what is your idea before reflection? Is it that this ſtrength will be ſubſervient to you, to your eaſe, to your pleaſure, to your intereſt in any ſenſe? No; the emotion you feel is, leſt this enormous ſtrength ſhould be employed to the purpoſes of *rapine and deſtruction. That power derives all its ſublimity from the terror with which it is generally accompanied, will appear evidently from its effect in the very few caſes in which it may be poſſible to ſtrip a conſiderable degree of ſtrength of its ability to hurt. When you do this, you ſpoil it of every thing ſublime, and it immediately becomes contemptible. An ox is a creature of vaſt ſtrength; but he is an innocent creature, extremely ſerviceable,

* Vide Part III. ſect. 21.

and

and not at all dangerous; for which reaſon the idea of an ox is by no means grand. A bull is ſtrong too: but his ſtrength is of another kind; often very deſtructive, ſeldom (at leaſt amongſt us) of any uſe in our buſineſs; the idea of a bull is therefore great, and it has frequently a place in ſublime deſcriptions, and elevating compariſons. Let us look at another ſtrong animal in the two diſtinct lights in which we may conſider him. The horſe in the light of an uſeful beaſt, fit for the plough, the road, the draft; in every ſocial uſeful light the horſe has nothing of the ſublime: but is it thus that we are affected with him, *whoſe neck is cloathed with thunder, the glory of whoſe noſtrils is terrible, who ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage, neither believeth that it is the ſound of the trumpet?* In this deſcription the uſeful character of the horſe entirely diſappears, and the terrible and ſublime blaze out together. We have continually about us animals of

a ſtrength that is conſiderable, but not pernicious. Amongſt theſe we never look for the ſublime; it comes upon us in the gloomy foreſt, and in the howling wilderneſs, in the form of the lion, the tiger, the panther, or rhinoceros. Whenever ſtrength is only uſeful, and employed for our benefit or our pleaſure, then it is never ſublime; for nothing can act agreeably to us, that does not act in conformity to our will; but to act agreeably to our will, it muſt be ſubject to us, and therefore can never be the cauſe of a grand and commanding conception. The deſcription of the wild aſs, in Job, is worked up into no ſmall ſublimity, merely by inſiſting on his freedom, and his ſetting mankind at defiance; otherwiſe the deſcription of ſuch an animal could have had nothing noble in it. *Who hath looſed* (ſays he) *the bands of the wild aſs? whoſe houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the barren land his dwellings. He ſcorneth the multitude of*

the

the city, neither regardeth he the voice of the driver. The range of the mountains is his paſture. The magnificent deſcription of the unicorn and of leviathan in the ſame book, is full of the ſame heightening circumſtances. *Will the unicorn be willing to ſerve thee? canſt thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? wilt thou truſt him becauſe his ſtrength is great?——Canſt thou draw out leviathan with an hook? will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a ſervant for ever? ſhall not one be caſt down even at the ſight of him?* In ſhort, whereſoever we find ſtrength, and in what light ſoever we look upon power, we ſhall all along obſerve the ſublime the concomitant of terror, and contempt the attendant on a ſtrength that is ſubſervient and innoxious. The race of dogs in many of their kinds, have generally a competent degree of ſtrength and ſwiftneſs; and they exert theſe and other valuable qualities which they poſſeſs, greatly to our

convenience and pleaſure. Dogs are indeed the moſt ſocial, affectionate, and amiable animals of the whole brute creation; but love approaches much nearer to contempt than is commonly imagined; and accordingly, though we careſs dogs, we borrow from them an appellation of the moſt deſpicable kind, when we employ terms of reproach; and this appellation is the common mark of the laſt vileneſs and contempt in every language. Wolves have not more ſtrength than ſeveral ſpecies of dogs; but, on account of their unmanageable fierceneſs, the idea of a wolf is not deſpicable; it is not excluded from grand deſcriptions and ſimilitudes. Thus we are affected by ſtrength, which is *natural* power. The power which ariſes from inſtitution in kings and commanders, has the ſame connection with terror. Sovereigns are frequently addreſſed with the title of *dread majeſty*. And it may be obſerved, that young perſons, little acquainted with the world, and

who

who have not been uſed to approach men in power, are commonly ſtruck with an awe which takes away the free uſe of their faculties. *When I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet* (ſays Job), *the young men ſaw me, and hid themſelves.* Indeed, ſo natural is this timidity with regard to power, and ſo ſtrongly does it inhere in our conſtitution, that very few are able to conquer it, but by mixing much in the buſineſs of the great world, or by uſing no ſmall violence to their natural diſpoſitions. I know ſome people are of opinion, that no awe, no degree of terror, accompanies the idea of power: and have hazarded to affirm, that we can contemplate the idea of God himſelf, without any ſuch emotion. I purpoſely avoided, when I firſt conſidered this ſubject, to introduce the idea of that great and tremendous Being, as an example in an argument ſo light as this; though it frequently occurred to me, not as an objection to, but as a ſtrong

confirmation of, my notions in this matter. I hope, in what I am going to ſay, I ſhall avoid preſumption, where it is almoſt impoſſible for any mortal to ſpeak with ſtrict propriety. I ſay then, that whilſt we conſider the Godhead merely as he is an object of the underſtanding, which forms a complex idea of power, wiſdom, juſtice, goodneſs, all ſtretched to a degree far exceeding the bounds of our comprehenſion, whilſt we conſider the Divinity in this refined and abſtracted light, the imagination and paſſions are little or nothing affected. But becauſe we are bound, by the condition of our nature, to aſcend to theſe pure and intellectual ideas, through the medium of ſenſible images, and to judge of theſe divine qualities by their evident acts and exertions, it becomes extremely hard to diſentangle our idea of the cauſe from the effect by which we are led to know it. Thus when we contemplate the Deity,

his attributes and their operation coming united on the mind, form a ſort of ſenſible image, and as ſuch are capable of affecting the imagination. Now, though in a juſt idea of the Deity, perhaps none of his attributes are predominant, yet to our imagination, his power is by far the moſt ſtriking. Some reflection, ſome comparing, is neceſſary to ſatisfy us of his wiſdom, his juſtice, and his goodneſs. To be ſtruck with his power, it is only neceſſary that we ſhould open our eyes. But whilſt we centemplate ſo vaſt an object, under the arm, as it were, of almighty power, and inveſted upon every ſide with omnipreſence, we ſhrink into the minuteneſs of our own nature, and are, in a manner, annihilated before him. And though a conſideration of his other attributes may relieve in ſome meaſure our apprehenſions; yet no conviction of the juſtice with which it is exerciſed, nor the

mercy with which it is tempered, can wholly remove the terror that naturally ariſes from a force which nothing can withſtand. If we rejoice, we rejoice with trembling: and even whilſt we are receiving benefits, we cannot but ſhudder at a power which can confer benefits of ſuch mighty importance. When the prophet David contemplated the wonders of wiſdom and power which are diſplayed in the œconomy of man, he ſeems to be ſtruck with a ſort of divine horror, and cries out, *Fearfully and wonderfully am I made!* An heathen poet has a ſentiment of a ſimilar nature; How race looks upon it as the laſt effort of philoſophical fortitude, to behold without terror and amazement, this immenſe and glorious fabric of the univerſe:

Hunc ſolem, et ſtellas, et decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, ſunt qui formidine nulla
Imbuti ſpectant.

Lucretius

Lucretius is a poet not to be ſuſpected of giving way to ſuperſtitious terrors; yet when he ſuppoſes the whole mechaniſm of nature laid open by the maſter of his philoſophy, his tranſport on this magnificent view, which he has repreſented in the colours of ſuch bold and lively poetry, is overcaſt with a ſhade of ſecret dread and horror:

His tibi me rebus quædam divina voluptas
Percipit, atque horror, quod ſic Natura tua vi
Tam manifeſta patet ex omni parte retecta.

But the ſcripture alone can ſupply ideas anſwerable to the majeſty of this ſubject. In the ſcripture, where-ever God is repreſented as appearing or ſpeaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and ſolemnity of the divine preſence. The pſalms, and the prophetical books, are crowded with inſtances of this kind. *The earth*

ſhook

ſhook (ſays the pſalmiſt), *the heavens alſo dropped at the preſence of the Lord.* And what is remarkable, the painting preſerves the ſame character, not only when he is ſuppoſed deſcending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power in acts of beneficence to mankind. *Tremble thou earth! at the preſence of the Lord; at the preſence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into ſtanding water, the flint into a fountain of waters!* It were endleſs to enumerate all the paſſages, both in the ſacred and profane writers, which eſtabliſh the general ſentiment of mankind, concerning the inſeparable union of a ſacred and reverential awe, with our ideas of the divinity. Hence the common maxim, *Primos in orbe deos fecit timor.* This maxim may be, as I believe it is, falſe with regard to the origin of religion. The maker of the maxim ſaw how inſeparable theſe ideas were, without

out

out considering that the notion of some great power must be always precedent to our dread of it. But this dread must necessarily follow the idea of such a power, when it is once excited in the mind. It is on this principle that true religion has, and must have, so large a mixture of salutary fear; and that false religions have generally nothing else but fear to support them. Before the Christian religion had, as it were, humanized the idea of the Divinity, and brought it somewhat nearer to us, there was very little said of the love of God. The followers of Plato have something of it, and only something; the other writers of pagan antiquity, whether poets or philosophers, nothing at all. And they who consider with what infinite attention, by what a disregard of every perishable object, through what long habits of piety and contemplation it is, any man is able to attain an entire love and devotion to the Deity, will easily perceive,

perceive, that it is not the firſt, the moſt natural, and the moſt ſtriking effect which proceeds from that idea. Thus we have traced power through its ſeveral gradations unto the higheſt of all, where our imagination is finally loſt; and we find terror, quite throughout the progreſs, its inſeparable companion, and growing along with it, as far as we can poſſibly trace them. Now, as power is undoubtedly a capital ſource of the ſublime, this will point out evidently from whence its energy is derived, and to what claſs of ideas we ought to unite it.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

PRIVATION.

ALL *general* privations are great, becauſe they are all terrible; *Vacuity*, *Darkneſs*, *Solitude*, and *Silence*. With what a fire of imagination, yet with what ſeverity of judgment, has Virgil amaſſed all theſe circumſtances, where he knows that all the images of a tremendous dignity ought to be united, at the mouth of hell! where, before he unlocks the ſecrets of the great deep, he ſeems to be ſeized with a religious horror, and to retire aſtoniſhed at the boldneſs of his own deſign:

Dî quibus imperium eſt animarum, umbræque ſilentes!
Et Chaos, et Phlegethon! loca nocte ſilentia *late!*
Sit mihi fas audita loqui! ſit numine veſtro
Pandere res alta terra et caligine *merſas!*

Ibant

Ibant obſcuri, ſola *ſub* nocte, *per* umbram,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas, *et* inania *regna.*

Ye ſubterraneous gods! whoſe awful ſway
The gliding ghoſts, and ſilent *ſhades obey;*
O Chaos, hear! and Phlegethon profound!
Whoſe ſolemn empire ſtretches wide around!
Give me, ye great tremendous powers, to tell
Of ſcenes and wonders in the depth of hell:
Give me your mighty ſecrets to diſplay
From thoſe black *realms of darkneſs to the day.*

PITT.

Obſcure *they went through dreary* ſhades *that led*
Along the waſte dominions of the dead.

DRYDEN.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

VASTNESS.

GREATNESS * of dimenſion is a powerful cauſe of the ſublime. This is too evident, and the obſervation too common, to need any illuſtration; it is not ſo common, to conſider in what ways greatneſs of dimenſion, vaſtneſs of extent or quantity, has the moſt ſtriking effect. For certainly, there are ways, and modes, wherein the ſame quantity of extenſion ſhall produce greater effects than it is found to do in others. Extenſion is either in length, height, or depth. Of theſe the length ſtrikes leaſt; an hundred yards of even ground will never work ſuch an effect as a tower an hundred yards high, or a rock or mountain of that altitude. I am apt to imagine likewiſe, that height is leſs grand than

* Part IV. ſect. 9.

depth;

deph; and that we are more ſtruck at looking down from a precipice, than looking up at an object of equal height: but of that I am not very poſitive. A perpendicular has more force in forming the ſublime, than an inclined plain; and the effects of a rugged and broken ſurface ſeem ſtronger than where it is ſmooth and poliſhed. It would carry us out of our way to enter in this place into the cauſe of theſe appearances; but certain it is they afford a large and fruitful field of ſpeculation. However, it may not be amiſs to add to theſe remarks upon magnitude, that, as the great extreme of dimenſion is ſublime, ſo the laſt extreme of littleneſs is in ſome meaſure ſublime likewiſe; when we attend to the infinite diviſibility of matter, when we purſue animal life into theſe exceſſively ſmall, and yet organized beings, that eſcape the niceſt inquiſition of the ſenſe, when we puſh our diſcoveries yet downward, and conſider thoſe creatures ſo many

many degrees yet ſmaller, and the ſtill diminiſhing ſcale of exiſtence, in tracing which the imagination is loſt as well as the ſenſe, we become amazed and confounded at the wonders of minuteneſs; nor can we diſtinguiſh in its effect this extreme of littleneſs from the vaſt itſelf. For diviſion muſt be infinite as well as addition; becauſe the idea of a perfect unity can no more be arrived at, than that of a complete whole, to which nothing may be added.

SECT. VIII.

INFINITY.

ANOTHER ſource of the ſublime is *Infinity*; if it does not rather belong to the laſt. Infinity has a tendency to fill the mind with that ſort of delightful horror, which is the moſt genuine effect, and trueſt teſt of the ſublime. There are ſcarce any things which

can become the objects of our ſenſes, that are really and in their own nature infinite. But the eye not being able to perceive the bounds of many things, they ſeem to be infinite, and they produce the ſame effects as if they were really ſo. We are deceived in the like manner, if the parts of ſome large object are ſo continued to any indefinite number, that the imagination meets no check which may hinder its extending them at pleaſure.

Whenever we repeat any idea frequently, the mind, by a ſort of mechaniſm, repeats it long after the firſt cauſe has ceaſed to operate *. After whirling about, when we ſit down, the objects about us ſtill ſeem to whirl. After a long ſucceſſion of noiſes, as the fall of waters, or the beating of forge-hammers, the hammers beat and the water roars in the imagination long after the firſt ſounds have ceaſed to affect it; and they die away at laſt by gradations which are

* Part IV. ſect 12.

ſcarcely

ſcarcely perceptible. If you hold up a ſtrait pole, with your eye to one end, it will ſeem extended to a length almoſt incredible *. Place a number of uniform and equidiſtant marks on this pole, they will cauſe the ſame deception, and ſeem multiplied without end. The ſenſes, ſtrongly affected in ſome one manner, cannot quickly change their tenor, or adapt themſelves to other things; but they continue in their old channel until the ſtrength of the firſt mover decays. This is the reaſon of an appearance very frequent in madmen; that they remain whole days and nights, ſometimes whole years, in the conſtant repetition of ſome remark, ſome complaint, or ſong; which having ſtruck powerfully on their diſordered imagination in the beginning of their phrenzy, every repetition reinforces it with new ſtrength; and the hurry of their ſpirits, unreſtrained by the curb of reaſon, continues it to the end of their lives.

* Part IV. ſect. 14.

SECT. IX.

SUCCESSION *and* UNIFORMITY.

SUCCESSION and *uniformity* of parts are what conſtitute the artificial infinite. 1. *Succeſſion*; which is requiſite that the parts may be continued ſo long and in ſuch a direction, as by their frequent impulſes on the ſenſe to impreſs the imagination with an idea of their progreſs beyond their actual limits. 2. *Uniformity*; becauſe if the figures of the parts ſhould be changed, the imagination at every change finds a check; you are preſented at every alteration with the termination of one idea, and the beginning of another; by which means it becomes impoſſible to continue that uninterrupted progreſſion, which alone can ſtamp on bounded objects the character of infinity. * It is in this kind of artifi-

* Mr. Addiſon, in the Spectators concerning the pleaſures of the imagination, thinks it is becauſe in the rotund at one glance you ſee half the building. This I do not imagine to be the real cauſe.

cial

cial infinity, I believe, we ought to look for the cauſe why a rotund has ſuch a noble effect. For in a rotund, whether it be a building or a plantation, you can no where fix a boundary; turn which way you will, the ſame object ſtill ſeems to continue, and the imagination has no reſt. But the parts muſt be uniform, as well as circularly diſpoſed, to give this figure its full force; becauſe any difference, whether it be in the diſpoſition or in the figure, or even in the colour of the parts, is highly prejudicial to the idea of infinity, which every change muſt check and interrupt, at every alteration commencing a new ſeries. On the ſame principles of ſucceſſion and uniformity, the grand appearance of the ancient heathen temples, which were generally oblong forms, with a range of uniform pillars on every ſide, will be eaſily accounted for. From the ſame cauſe alſo may be derived the grand effect of our aiſles in many of our own old

cathedrals. The form of a croſs uſed in ſome churches ſeems to me not ſo eligible as the parallelogram of the ancients; at leaſt, I imagine it is not ſo proper for the outſide. For ſuppoſing the arms of the croſs every way equal, if you ſtand in a direction parallel to any of the ſide walls, or colonnades, inſtead of a deception that makes the building more extended than it is, you are cut off from a conſiderable part (two thirds) of its *actual* length; and to prevent all poſſibility of progreſſion, the arms of the croſs taking a new direction, make a right angle with the beam, and thereby wholly turn the imagination from the repetition of the former idea. Or ſuppoſe the ſpectator placed where he may take a direct view of ſuch a building, what will be the conſequence? the neceſſary conſequence will be, that a good part of the baſis of each angle formed by the interſection of the arms of the croſs, muſt be inevitably loſt; the whole muſt of courſe aſſume a

broken unconnected figure; the lights muſt be unequal, here ſtrong, and there weak; without that noble gradation, which the perſpective always effects on parts diſpoſed uninterruptedly in a right line. Some or all of theſe objections will lie againſt every figure of a croſs, in whatever view you take it. I exemplified them in the Greek croſs, in which theſe faults appear the moſt ſtrongly; but they appear in ſome degree in all ſorts of croſſes. Indeed there is nothing more prejudicial to the grandeur of buildings, than to abound in angles; a fault obvious in many; and owing to an inordinate thirſt for variety, which, whenever it prevails, is ſure to leave very little true taſte.

SECT. X.

Magnitude in BUILDING.

TO the ſublime in building, greatneſs of dimenſion ſeems requiſite; for on a few parts, and thoſe ſmall, the imagination cannot riſe to any idea of infinity. No greatneſs in the manner can effectually compenſate for the want of proper dimenſions. There is no danger of drawing men into extravagant deſigns by this rule; it carries its own caution along with it. Becauſe too great a length in buildings deſtroys the purpoſe of greatneſs, which it was intended to promote; the perſpective will leſſen it in height as it gains in length; and will bring it at laſt to a point; turning the whole figure into a ſort of triangle, the pooreſt in its effect of almoſt any figure that can be preſented to the eye. I have ever obſerved, that colonnades and avenues of

trees

trees of a moderate length, were without comparison far grander, than when they were ſuffered to run to immenſe diſtances. A true artiſt ſhould put a generous deceit on the ſpectators, and effect the nobleſt deſigns by eaſy methods. Deſigns that are vaſt only by their dimenſions, are always the ſign of a common and low imagination. No work of art can be great, but as it deceives; to be otherwiſe is the prerogative of nature only. A good eye will fix the medium betwixt an exceſſive length or heighth (for the ſame objection lies againſt both), and a ſhort or broken quantity; and perhaps it might be aſcertained to a tolerable degree of exactneſs, if it was my purpoſe to deſcend far into the particulars of any art.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

INFINITY in pleaſing OBJECTS.

INFINITY, though of another kind, cauſes much of our pleaſure in agreeable, as well as of our delight in ſublime images. The ſpring is the pleaſanteſt of the ſeaſons; and the young of moſt animals, though far from being completely faſhioned, afford a more agreeable ſenſation than the full-grown; becauſe the imagination is entertained with the promiſe of ſomething more, and does not acquieſce in the preſent object of the ſenſe. In unfiniſhed ſketches of drawing, I have often ſeen ſomething which pleaſed me beyond the beſt finiſhing; and this I believe proceeds from the cauſe I have juſt now aſſigned.

SECT. XII.

DIFFICULTY.

*ANOTHER ſource of greatneſs is *Difficulty*. When any work ſeems to have required immenſe force and labour to effect it, the idea is grand. Stonehenge, neither for diſpoſition nor ornament, has any thing admirable; but thoſe huge rude maſſes of ſtone, ſet on end, and piled each on other, turn the mind on the immenſe force neceſſary for ſuch a work. Nay, the rudeneſs of the work increaſes this cauſe of grandeur, as it excludes the idea of art and contrivance; for dexterity produces another ſort of effect, which is different enough from this.

* Part IV. ſect. 4, 5, 6.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

MAGNIFICENCE.

MAGNIFICENCE is likewiſe a ſource of the ſublime. A great profuſion of things, which are ſplendid or valuable in themſelves, is *magnificent*. The ſtarry heaven, though it occurs ſo very frequently to our view, never fails to excite an idea of grandeur. This cannot be owing to any thing in the ſtars themſelves, ſeparately conſidered. The number is certainly the cauſe. The apparent diſorder augments the grandeur, for the appearance of care is highly contrary to our ideas of magnificence. Beſides, the ſtars lie in ſuch apparent confuſion, as makes it impoſſible on ordinary occaſions to reckon them. This gives them the advantage of a ſort of infinity. In works of art, this kind of grandeur, which conſiſts in multitude, is to be very cautiouſly admitted;

admitted; becauſe a profuſion of excellent things is not to be attained, or with too much difficulty; and becauſe in many caſes this ſplendid confuſion would deſtroy all uſe, which ſhould be attended to in moſt of the works of art with the greateſt care; beſides it is to be conſidered, that unleſs you can produce an appearance of infinity by your diſorder, you will have diſorder only without magnificence. There are, however, a ſort of fire-works, and ſome other things, that in this way ſucceed well, and are truly grand. There are alſo many deſcriptions in the poets and orators, which owe their ſublimity to a richneſs and profuſion of images, in which the mind is ſo dazzled as to make it impoſſible to attend to that exact coherence and agreement of the alluſions, which we ſhould require on every other occaſion. I do not now remember a more ſtriking example of this, than the deſcription which is given of the king's army in the play of Henry the Fourth:

All furniſh'd, all in arms,
All plum'd like oſtriches that with the wind
Baited like eagles having lately bathed:
As full of ſpirit as the month of May,
And gorgeous as the ſun in midſummer,
Wanton as youthful goats, wild as young bulls.
I ſaw young Harry with his beaver on
Riſe from the ground like feather'd Mercury;
And vaulted with ſuch eaſe into his ſeat
As if an angel dropped from the clouds
To turn and wind a fiery Pegaſus.

In that excellent book, ſo remarkable for the vivacity of its deſcriptions, as well as the ſolidity and penetration of its ſentences, the Wiſdom of the ſon of Sirach, there is a noble panegyric on the high prieſt Simon the ſon of Onias; and it is a very fine example of the point before us:

How was he honoured in the midſt of the people, in his coming out of the ſanctuary! He was as the morning ſtar in the midſt of a cloud, and as the moon at the full; as the ſun ſhining upon the temple of the Moſt High,

High, and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds: and as the flower of roses in the spring of the year, as lilies by the rivers of waters, and as the frankincense tree in summer; as fire and incense in the censer, and as a vessel of gold set with precious stones; as a fair olive tree budding forth fruit, and as a cypress which groweth up to the clouds. When he put on the robe of honour, and was cloathed with the perfection of glory, when he went up to the holy altar, he made the garment of holiness honourable. He himself stood by the hearth of the altar, compassed with his brethren round about, as a young cedar in Libanus, and as palm trees compassed they him about. So were all the sons of Aaron in their glory, and the oblations of the Lord in their hands, &c.

SECT.

SECT. XIV.

LIGHT.

HAVING conſidered extenſion, ſo far as it is capable of raiſing ideas of greatneſs; *colour* comes next under conſideration. All colours depend on *light*. Light therefore ought previouſly to be examined; and with it its oppoſite, darkneſs. With regard to light, to make it a cauſe capable of producing the ſublime, it muſt be attended with ſome circumſtances, beſides its bare faculty of ſhewing other objects. Mere light is too common a thing to make a ſtrong impreſſion on the mind, and without a ſtrong impreſſion nothing can be ſublime. But ſuch a light as that of the ſun, immediately exerted on the eye, as it overpowers the ſenſe, is a very great idea. Light of an inferior ſtrength to this, if it moves with great celerity, has the

ſame power; for lightning is certainly productive of grandeur, which it owes chiefly to the extreme velocity of its motion. A quick tranſition from light to darkneſs, or from darkneſs to light, has yet a greater effect. But darkneſs is more productive of ſublime ideas than light. Our great poet was convinced of this; and indeed ſo full was he of this idea, ſo entirely poſſeſſed with the power of a well-managed darkneſs, that in deſcribing the appearance of the Deity, amidſt that profuſion of magnificent images which the grandeur of his ſubject provokes him to pour out upon every ſide, he is far from forgetting the obſcurity which ſurrounds the moſt incompreheńſible of all beings, but

——*With the majeſty of* darkneſs *round*
Circles his throne.

And what is no leſs remarkable, our author had the ſecret of preſerving this idea,

even when he ſeemed to depart the fartheſt from it, when he deſcribes the light and glory which flows from the divine preſence; a light which by its very exceſs is converted into a ſpecies of darkneſs.

Dark *with exceſſive light thy ſkirts appear.*

Here is an idea not only poetical in an high degree, but ſtrictly and philoſophically juſt. Extreme light, by overcoming the organs of ſight, obliterates all objects, ſo as in its effect exactly to reſemble darkneſs. After looking for ſome time at the ſun, two black ſpots, the impreſſion which it leaves, ſeem to dance before our eyes. Thus are two ideas as oppoſite as can be imagined reconciled in the extremes of both; and both in ſpite of their oppoſite nature brought to concur in producing the ſublime. And this is not the only inſtance wherein the oppoſite

pofite extremes operate equally in favour of the ſublime, which in all things abhors mediocrity.

SECT. XV.

Light in BUILDING.

AS the management of light is a matter of importance in architecture, it is worth enquiring, how far this remark is applicable to building. I think then, that all edifices calculated to produce an idea of the ſublime, ought rather to be dark and gloomy, and this for two reaſons; the firſt is, that darkneſs itſelf on other occaſions is known by experience to have a greater effect on the paſſions than light. The ſecond is, that to make an object very ſtriking, we ſhould make it as different as poſſible from the objects with which we have been immediately converſant; when there-

fore you enter a building, you cannot paſs into a greater light than you had in the open air; to go into one ſome few degrees leſs luminous, can make only a trifling change; but to make the tranſition thoroughly ſtriking, you ought to paſs from the greateſt light, to as much darkneſs as is conſiſtent with the uſes of architecture. At night the contrary rule will hold, but for the very ſame reaſon; and the more highly a room is then illuminated, the grander will the paſſion be.

SECT.

SECT. XVI.

COLOUR considered as productive of the SUBLIME.

AMONG colours, ſuch as are ſoft or cheerful (except perhaps a ſtrong red which is cheerful) are unfit to produce grand images. An immenſe mountain covered with a ſhining green turf, is nothing, in this reſpect, to one dark and gloomy; the cloudy ſky is more grand than the blue; and night more ſublime and ſolemn than day. Therefore in hiſtorical painting, a gay or gaudy drapery can never have a happy effect: and in buildings, when the higheſt degree of the ſublime is intended, the materials and ornaments ought neither to be white, nor green, nor yellow, nor blue, nor of a pale red, nor violet, nor ſpotted, but of ſad and fuſcous colours, as black, or brown, or deep purple, and the like.

Much of gilding, moſaics, painting, or ſtatues, contribute but little to the ſublime. This rule need not be put in practice, except where an uniform degree of the moſt ſtriking ſublimity is to be produced, and that in every particular; for it ought to be obſerved, that this melancholy kind of greatneſs, though it be certainly the higheſt, ought not to be ſtudied in all ſorts of edifices, where yet grandeur muſt be ſtudied; in ſuch caſes the ſublimity muſt be drawn from the other ſources; with a ſtrict caution however againſt any thing light and riant; as nothing ſo effectually deadens the whole taſte of the ſublime.

SECT. XVII.

SOUND and LOUDNESS.

THE eye is not the only organ of ſenſation, by which a ſublime paſſion may be produced. Sounds have a great

great power in theſe as in moſt other paſſions. I do not mean words, becauſe words do not affect ſimply by their ſounds, but by means altogether different. Exceſſive loudneſs alone is ſufficient to overpower the ſoul, to ſuſpend its action, and to fill it with terror. The noiſe of vaſt cataracts, raging ſtorms, thunder, or artillery, awakes a great and awful ſenſation in the mind, though we can obſerve no nicety or artifice in thoſe ſorts of muſic. The ſhouting of multitudes has a ſimilar effect; and, by the ſole ſtrength of the ſound, ſo amazes and confounds the imagination, that, in this ſtaggering, and hurry of the mind, the beſt eſtabliſhed tempers can ſcarcely forbear being borne down, and joining in the common cry, and common reſolution of the crowd.

SECT. XVIII.

SUDDENNESS.

A Sudden beginning, or ſudden ceſſation of ſound of any conſiderable force, has the ſame power. The attention is rouſed by this; and the faculties driven forward, as it were, on their guard. Whatever either in ſights or ſounds makes the tranſition from one extreme to the other eaſy, cauſes no terror, and conſequently can be no cauſe of greatneſs. In every thing ſudden and unexpected, we are apt to ſtart; that is, we have a perception of danger, and our nature rouſes us to guard againſt it. It may be obſerved that a ſingle ſound of ſome ſtrength, though but of ſhort duration, if repeated after intervals, has a grand effect. Few things are more awful than the ſtriking of a great clock, when the ſilence of the night prevents the attention from being too

too much diſſipated. The ſame may be ſaid of a ſingle ſtroke on a drum, repeated with pauſes; and of the ſucceſſive firing of cannon at a diſtance. All the effects mentioned in this ſection have cauſes very nearly alike.

SECT. XIX.

INTERMITTING.

A LOW, tremulous, intermitting, ſound, though it ſeems in ſome reſpects oppoſite to that juſt mentioned, is productive of the ſublime. It is worth while to examine this a little. The fact itſelf muſt be determined by every man's own experience and reflection. I have already obſerved, that * night increaſes our terror, more perhaps than any thing elſe; it is our nature, when we do not know what may happen to us, to fear the worſt that can happen us; and hence

* Sect. 3.

it

it is, that uncertainty is ſo terrible, that we often ſeek to be rid of it, at the hazard of a certain miſchief. Now, ſome low, confuſed, uncertain ſounds leave us in the ſame fearful anxiety concerning their cauſes, that no light, or an uncertain light, does concerning the objects that ſurround us.

Quale per incertam lunam ſub luce maligna
Eſt iter in ſylvis. ——

——*A faint ſhadow of uncertain light,*
Like as a lamp, whoſe life doth fade away;
Or as the moon clothed with cloudy night
Doth ſhew to him who walks in fear and great affright.

SPENSER.

But a light now appearing, and now leaving us, and ſo off and on, is even more terrible than total darkneſs: and a ſort of uncertain ſounds are, when the neceſſary diſpoſitions concur, more alarming than a total ſilence.

SECT.

SECT. XX.

The cries of ANIMALS.

SUCH ſounds as imitate the natural inarticulate voices of men, or any animals in pain or danger, are capable of conveying great ideas; unleſs it be the well-known voice of ſome creature, on which we are uſed to look with contempt. The angry tones of wild beaſts are equally capable of cauſing a great and awful ſenſation.

Hinc exaudiri gemitus, iræque leonum
Vincla recuſantum, et ſera ſub nocte rudentum;
Setigerique ſues, atque in præſepibus urſi
Sævire; et formæ magnorum ululare luporum.

It might ſeem that theſe modulations of ſound carry ſome connection with the nature of the things they repreſent, and are not merely arbitrary; becauſe the natu-

ral

ral cries of all animals, even of thoſe animals with whom we have not been acquainted, never fail to make themſelves ſufficiently underſtood; this cannot be ſaid of language. The modifications of ſound, which may be productive of the ſublime, are almoſt infinite. Thoſe I have mentioned, are only a few inſtances to ſhew, on what principles they are all built.

SECT. XXI.

SMELL and TASTE. BITTERS and STENCHES.

SMELLS, and *Taſtes*, have ſome ſhare too in ideas of greatneſs; but it is a ſmall one, weak in its nature, and confined in its operations. I ſhall only obſerve, that no ſmells or taſtes can produce a grand ſenſation, except exceſſive bitters, and intolerable ſtenches. It is true, that theſe affections of the ſmell and

taſte, when they are in their full force, and lean directly upon the ſenſory, are ſimply painful, and accompanied with no ſort of delight; but when they are moderated, as in a deſcription or narrative, they become ſources of the ſublime, as genuine as any other, and upon the very ſame principle of a moderated pain. "A "cup of bitterneſs;" "to drain the bitter "cup of fortune;" "the bitter apples of "Sodom;" theſe are all ideas ſuitable to a ſublime deſcription. Nor is this paſſage of Virgil without ſublimity, where the ſtench of the vapour in Albunea conſpires ſo happily with the ſacred horror and gloomineſs of that prophetic foreſt:

At rex ſolicicus monſtris oracula Fauni
Fatidici genitoris adit, lucoſque ſub alta
Conſulit Albunea, nemorum quæ maxima ſacro
Fonte ſonat; ſævamquæ exhalat opaca Mephitim.

In the ſixth book, and in a very ſublime deſcription, the poiſonous exhalation of

Acheron is not forgot, nor does it at all diſagree with the other images amongſt which it is introduced :

Spelunca alta *fuit*, vaſtoque immanis *hiatu*
Scrupea, *tuta* lacu nigro, *nemorumque* tenebris,
Quam ſuper haud ullæ poterant impune volantes
Tendere iter pennis, talis ſeſe halitus atris
Faucibus effundens ſupera ad convexa ferebat.

I have added theſe examples, becauſe ſome friends, for whoſe judgment I have great deference, were of opinion, that if the ſentiment ſtood nakedly by itſelf, it would be ſubject, at firſt view, to burleſque and ridicule ; but this I imagine would principally ariſe from conſidering the bitterneſs and ſtench in company with mean and contemptible ideas, with which it muſt be owned they are often united ; ſuch an union degrades the ſublime in all other inſtances as well as in thoſe. But it is one of the teſts by which the ſublimity of an image is to be tried, not whether

ther it becomes mean when associated with mean ideas; but whether, when united with images of an allowed grandeur, the whole composition is supported with dignity. Things which are terrible are always great; but when things possess disagreeable qualities, or such as have indeed some degree of danger, but of a danger easily overcome, they are merely *odious*, as toads and spiders.

SECT. XXII.

FEELING. PAIN.

OF *Feeling*, little more can be said than that the idea of bodily pain, in all the modes and degrees of labour, pain, anguish, torment, is productive of the sublime; and nothing else in this sense can produce it. I need not give here any fresh instances, as those given in the former sections abundantly illustrate a remark, that in reality wants only an at-

tention to nature, to be made by every body.

Having thus run through the cauſes of the ſublime with reference to all the ſenſes, my firſt obſervation (ſect. 7.) will be found very nearly true; that the ſublime is an idea belonging to ſelf-preſervation; that it is therefore one of the moſt affecting we have; that its ſtrongeſt emotion is an emotion of diſtreſs; and that no * pleaſure from a poſitive cauſe belongs to it. Numberleſs examples, beſides thoſe mentioned, might be brought in ſupport of theſe truths, and many perhaps uſeful conſequences drawn from them—

Sed fugit interea, fugit irrevocabile tempus,
Singula dum capti circumvectamur amore.

* Vide part I. ſect. 6.

The End of the Second Part.

A Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

PART III.

SECT. I.

Of BEAUTY.

IT is my deſign to conſider beauty as diſtinguiſhed from the ſublime; and, in the courſe of the enquiry, to examine how far it is conſiſtent with it. But previous to this, we muſt take a ſhort review of the opinions already entertained of this quality; which I think are hardly to be reduced to any fixed principles; becauſe

men are uſed to talk of beauty in a figurative manner, that is to ſay, in a manner extremely uncertain, and indeterminate. By beauty I mean that quality, or thoſe qualities in bodies, by which they cauſe love, or ſome paſſion ſimilar to it. I confine this definition to the merely ſenſible qualities of things, for the ſake of preſerving the utmoſt ſimplicity in a ſubject which muſt always diſtract us, whenever we take in thoſe various cauſes of ſympathy which attach us to any perſons or things from ſecondary conſiderations, and not from the direct force which they have merely on being viewed. I likewiſe diſtinguiſh love, by which I mean that ſatisfaction which ariſes to the mind upon contemplating any thing beautiful, of whatſoever nature it may be, from deſire or luſt; which is an energy of the mind, that hurries us on to the poſſeſſion of certain objects, that do not affect us as they are beautiful, but by means altogether different. We ſhall

have

have a ſtrong deſire for a woman of no remarkable beauty; whilſt the greateſt beauty in men, or in other animals, though it cauſes love, yet excites nothing at all of deſire. Which ſhews that beauty, and the paſſion cauſed by beauty, which I call love, is different from deſire, though deſire may ſometimes operate along with it; but it is to this latter that we muſt attribute thoſe violent and tempeſtuous paſſions, and the conſequent emotions of the body which attend what is called love in ſome of its ordinary acceptations, and not to the effects of beauty merely as it is ſuch.

SECT. II.

Proportion not the cauſe of BEAUTY in VEGETABLES.

BEAUTY hath uſually been ſaid to conſiſt in certain proportions of

parts. On conſidering the matter, I have great reaſon to doubt, whether beauty be at all an idea belonging to proportion. Proportion relates almoſt wholly to convenience, as every idea of order ſeems to do; and it muſt therefore be conſidered as a creature of the underſtanding, rather than a primary cauſe acting on the ſenſes and imagination. It is not by the force of long attention and enquiry that we find any object to be beautiful; beauty demands no aſſiſtance from our reaſoning; even the will is unconcerned; the appearance of beauty as effectually cauſes ſome degree of love in us, as the application of ice or fire produces the ideas of heat or cold. To gain ſomething like a ſatisfactory concluſion in this point, it were well to examine, what proportion is; ſince ſeveral who make uſe of that word, do not always ſeem to underſtand very clearly the force of the term, nor to have very diſtinct ideas concerning the thing itſelf. Proportion is

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the meaſure of relative quantity. Since all quantity is diviſible, it is evident that every diſtinct part into which any quantity is divided, muſt bear ſome relation to the other parts, or to the whole. Theſe relations give an origin to the idea of proportion. They are diſcovered by menſuration, and they are the objects of mathematical enquiry. But whether any part of any determinate quantity be a fourth, or a fifth, or a ſixth, or moiety of the whole; or whether it be of equal length with any other part, or double its length, or but one half, is a matter merely indifferent to the mind; it ſtands neuter in the queſtion: and it is from this abſolute indifference and tranquillity of the mind, that mathematical ſpeculations derive ſome of their moſt conſiderable advantages; becauſe there is nothing to intereſt the imagination; becauſe the judgment ſits free and unbiaſſed to examine the point. All proportions, every arrangement of quantity

is alike to the underſtanding, becauſe the ſame truths reſult to it from all; from greater, from leſſer, from equality and inequality. But ſurely beauty is no idea belonging to menſuration; nor has it any thing to do with calculation and geometry. If it had, we might then point out ſome certain meaſures which we could demonſtrate to be beautiful, either as ſimply conſidered, or as related to others; and we could call in thoſe natural objects, for whoſe beauty we have no voucher but the ſenſe, to this happy ſtandard, and confirm the voice of our paſſions by the determination of our reaſon. But ſince we have not this help, let us ſee whether proportion can in any ſenſe be conſidered as the cauſe of beauty, as hath been ſo generally, and by ſome ſo confidently affirmed. If proportion be one of the conſtituents of beauty, it muſt derive that power either from ſome natural properties inherent in certain meaſures, which operate mechanically;

nically; from the operation of cuſtom; or from the fitneſs which ſome meaſures have to anſwer ſome particular ends of conveniency. Our buſineſs therefore is to enquire, whether the parts of thoſe objects, which are found beautiful in the vegetable or animal kingdoms, are conſtantly ſo formed according to ſuch certain meaſures, as may ſerve to ſatisfy us that their beauty reſults from thoſe meaſures, on the principle of a natural mechanical cauſe; or from cuſtom; or, in fine, from their fitneſs for any determinate purpoſes. I intend to examine this point under each of theſe heads in their order. But before I proceed further, I hope it will not be thought amiſs, if I lay down the rules which governed me in this enquiry, and which have miſled me in it, if I have gone aſtray. 1. If two bodies produce the ſame or a ſimilar effect on the mind, and on examination they are found to agree in ſome of their properties, and to differ in others; the

common effect is to be attributed to the properties in which they agree, and not to thoſe in which they differ. 2. Not to account for the effect of a natural object from the effect of an artificial object. 3. Not to account for the effect of any natural object from a concluſion of our reaſon concerning its uſes, if a natural cauſe may be aſſigned. 4. Not to admit any determinate quantity, or any relation of quantity, as the cauſe of a certain effect, if the effect is produced by different or oppoſite meaſures and relations; or if theſe meaſures and relations may exiſt, and yet the effect may not be produced. Theſe are the rules which I have chiefly followed, whilſt I examined into the power of proportion conſidered as a natural cauſe; and theſe, if he thinks them juſt, I requeſt the reader to carry with him throughout the following diſcuſſion; whilſt we enquire in the firſt place, in what things we find this quality of beauty; next, to ſee whether in

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theſe we can find any aſſignable propor-
tions, in ſuch a manner as ought to con-
vince us that our idea of beauty reſults
from them. We ſhall conſider this
pleaſing power, as it appears in vegeta-
bles, in the inferior animals, and in man.
Turning our eyes to the vegetable crea-
tion, we find nothing there ſo beautiful
as flowers; but flowers are almoſt of
every ſort of ſhape, and of every ſort of
diſpoſition; they are turned and faſhion-
ed into an infinite variety of forms; and
from theſe forms, botaniſts have given
them their names, which are almoſt as
various. What proportion do we diſco-
ver between the ſtalks and the leaves of
flowers, or between the leaves and the
piſtils? How does the ſlender ſtalk of the
roſe agree with the bulky head under
which it bends? but the roſe is a beauti-
ful flower; and can we undertake to ſay
that it does not owe a great deal of its
beauty even to that diſproportion? the
roſe is a large flower, yet it grows upon
a ſmall

a ſmall ſhrub; the flower of the apple is very ſmall, and grows upon a large tree; yet the roſe and the apple bloſſom are both beautiful, and the plants that bear them are moſt engagingly attired, notwithſtanding this diſproportion. What by general conſent is allowed to be a more beautiful object than an orange tree, flouriſhing at once with its leaves, its bloſſoms, and its fruit? but it is in vain that we ſearch here for any proportion between the height, the breadth, or any thing elſe concerning the dimenſions of the whole, or concerning the relation of the particular parts to each other. I grant that we may obſerve in many flowers, ſomething of a regular figure, and of a methodical diſpoſition of the leaves. The roſe has ſuch a figure and ſuch a diſpoſition of its petals; but in an oblique view, when this figure is in a good meaſure loſt, and the order of the leaves confounded, it yet retains its beauty; the roſe is even more beautiful be-

fore it is full blown; and the bud, before this exact figure is formed; and this is not the only inſtance wherein method and exactneſs, the ſoul of proportion, are found rather prejudicial than ſerviceable to the cauſe of beauty.

SECT. III.

Proportion not the cauſe of BEAUTY in ANIMALS.

THAT proportion has but a ſmall ſhare in the formation of beauty, is full as evident among animals. Here the greateſt variety of ſhapes, and diſpoſitions of parts, are well fitted to excite this idea. The ſwan, confeſſedly a beautiful bird, has a neck longer than the reſt of his body, and but a very ſhort tail: is this a beautiful proportion? we muſt allow that it is. But then what ſhall we ſay to the peacock, who has comparatively but a ſhort neck, with a tail longer than

the neck and the reſt of the body taken together? How many birds are there that vary infinitely from each of theſe ſtandards, and from every other which you can fix, with proportions different, and often directly oppoſite to each other! and yet many of theſe birds are extremely beautiful; when upon conſidering them we find nothing in any one part that might determine us, *à priori*, to ſay what the others ought to be, nor indeed to gueſs any thing about them, but what experience might ſhew to be full of diſappoinment and miſtake. And with regard to the colours either of birds or flowers, for there is ſomething ſimilar in the colouring of both, whether they are conſidered in their extenſion or gradation, there is nothing of proportion to be obſerved. Some are of but one ſingle colour; others have all the colours of the rainbow; ſome are of the primary colours, others are of the mixt; in ſhort, an attentive obſerver may ſoon conclude,

that

that there is as little of proportion in the colouring as in the ſhapes of theſe objects. Turn next to beaſts; examine the head of a beautiful horſe; find what proportion that bears to his body, and to his limbs, and what relations theſe have to each other; and when you have ſettled theſe proportions as a ſtandard of beauty, then take a dog or cat, or any other animal, and examine how far the ſame proportions between their heads and their neck, between thoſe and the body, and ſo on, are found to hold; I think we may ſafely ſay, that they differ in every ſpecies, yet that there are individuals found in a great many ſpecies ſo differing, that have a very ſtriking beauty. Now, if it be allowed that very different, and even contrary, forms and diſpoſitions are conſiſtent with beauty, it amounts I believe to a conceſſion, that no certain meaſures operating from a natural principle, are neceſſary to pro-

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duce it, at leaſt ſo far as the brute ſpecies is concerned.

SECT. IV.

Proportion not the cauſe of BEAUTY in the HUMAN ſpecies.

THERE are ſome parts of the human body, that are obſerved to hold certain proportions to each other; but before it can be proved, that the efficient cauſe of beauty lies in theſe, it muſt be ſhewn, that wherever theſe are found exact, the perſon to whom they belong is beautiful: I mean in the effect produced on the view, either of any member diſtinctly conſidered, or of the whole body together. It muſt be likewiſe ſhewn, that theſe parts ſtand in ſuch a relation to each other, that the compariſon between them may be eaſily made, and that the affection of the mind may naturally reſult from it. For

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my part, I have at ſeveral times very carefully examined many of thoſe proportions, and found them hold very nearly, or altogether alike in many ſubjects, which were not only very different from one another, but where one has been very beautiful, and the other very remote from beauty. With regard to the parts which are found ſo proportioned, they are often ſo remote from each other, in ſituation, nature, and office, that I cannot ſee how they admit of any compariſon, nor conſequently how any effect owing to proportion can reſult from them. The neck, ſay they, in beautiful bodies, ſhould meaſure with the calf of the leg; it ſhould likewiſe be twice the circumference of the wriſt. And an infinity of obſervations of this kind are to be found in the writings and converſations of many. But what relation has the calf of the leg to the neck; or either of theſe parts to the wriſt? Theſe proportions are certainly to be found in hand-

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ſome bodies. They are as certainly in ugly ones; as any who will take the pains to try may find. Nay, I do not know but they may be leaſt perfect in ſome of the moſt beautiful. You may aſſign any proportions you pleaſe to every part of the human body; and I undertake that a painter ſhall religiouſly obſerve them all, and notwithſtanding produce, if he pleaſes, a very ugly figure. The ſame painter ſhall conſiderably deviate from theſe proportions, and produce a very beautiful one. And indeed it may be obſerved in the maſterpieces of the ancient and modern ſtatuary, that ſeveral of them differ very widely from the proportions of others, in parts very conſpicuous, and of great conſideration; and that they differ no leſs from the proportions we find in living men, of forms extremely ſtriking and agreeable. And after all, how are the partizans of proportional beauty agreed amongſt themſelves about the

proportions of the human body? ſome hold it to be ſeven heads; ſome make it eight; whilſt others extend it even to ten; a vaſt difference in ſuch a ſmall number of diviſions! Others take other methods of eſtimating the proportions, and all with equal ſucceſs. But are theſe proportions exactly the ſame in all handſome men? or are they at all the proportions found in beautiful women? nobody will ſay that they are; yet both ſexes are undoubtedly capable of beauty, and the female of the greateſt; which advantage I believe will hardly be attributed to the ſuperior exactneſs of proportion in the fair ſex. Let us reſt a moment on this point; and conſider how much difference there is between the meaſures that prevail in many ſimilar parts of the body, in the two ſexes of this ſingle ſpecies only. If you aſſign any determinate proportions to the limbs of a man, and if you limit human beauty to theſe proportions, when you

find a woman who differs in the make and meaſures of almoſt every part, you muſt conclude her not to be beautiful, in ſpite of the ſuggeſtions of your imagination; or, in obedience to your imagination, you muſt renounce your rules; you muſt lay by the ſcale and compaſs, and look out for ſome other cauſe of beauty. For if beauty be attached to certain meaſures which operate from a *principle in nature*, why ſhould ſimilar parts with different meaſures of proportion be found to have beauty, and this too in the very ſame ſpecies? but to open our view a little, it is worth obſerving, that almoſt all animals have parts of very much the ſame nature, and deſtined nearly to the ſame purpoſes; an head, neck, body, feet, eyes, ears, noſe, and mouth; yet Providence, to provide in the beſt manner for their ſeveral wants, and to diſplay the riches of his wiſdom and goodneſs in his creation, has worked out of theſe few and ſimilar organs, and members, a di-

verſity

verſity hardly ſhort of infinite in their diſpoſition, meaſures, and relation. But, as we have before obſerved, amidſt this infinite diverſity, one particular is common to many ſpecies; ſeveral of the individuals which compoſe them are capable of affecting us with a ſenſe of lovelineſs; and whilſt they agree in producing this effect, they differ extremely in the relative meaſures of thoſe parts which have produced it. Theſe conſiderations were ſufficient to induce me to reject the notion of any particular proportions that operated by nature to produce a pleaſing effect; but thoſe who will agree with me with regard to a particular proportion, are ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in favour of one more indefinite. They imagine, that although beauty in general is annexed to no certain meaſures common to the ſeveral kinds of pleaſing plants and animals; yet that there is a certain proportion in each ſpecies abſolutely eſſential to the beauty

of that particular kind. If we conſider the animal world in general, we find beauty confined to no certain meaſures; but as ſome peculiar meaſure and relation of parts is what diſtinguiſhes each peculiar claſs of animals, it muſt of neceſſity be, that the beautiful in each kind will be found in the meaſures and proportions of that kind; for otherwiſe it would deviate from its proper ſpecies, and become in ſome ſort monſtrous: however, no ſpecies is ſo ſtrictly confined to any certain proportions, that there is not a conſiderable variation amongſt the individuals; and as it has been ſhewn of the human, ſo it may be ſhewn of the brute kinds, that beauty is found indifferently in all the proportions which each kind can admit, without quitting its common form; and it is this idea of a common form that makes the proportion of parts at all regarded, and not the operation of any natural cauſe: indeed a little conſideration will make it appear, that

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it is not meaſure but manner that creates all the beauty which belongs to ſhape. What light do we borrow from theſe boaſted proportions, when we ſtudy ornamental deſign? It ſeems amazing to me, that artiſts, if they were as well convinced as they pretend to be, that proportion is a principal cauſe of beauty, have not by them at all times accurate meaſurements of all ſorts of beautiful animals to help them to proper proportions, when they would contrive any thing elegant, eſpecially as they frequently aſſert, that it is from an obſervation of the beautiful in nature they direct their practice. I know that it has been ſaid long ſince, and echoed backward and forward from one writer to another a thouſand times, that the proportions of building have been taken from thoſe of the human body. To make this forced analogy complete, they repreſent a man with his arms raiſed and extended at full length, and then deſcribe a ſort of ſquare, as it is formed by

paſſing lines along the extremities of this ſtrange figure. But it appears very clearly to me, that the human figure never ſupplied the architect with any of his ideas. For in the firſt place, men are very rarely ſeen in this ſtrained poſture; it is not natural to them; neither is it at all becoming. Secondly, the view of the human figure ſo diſpoſed, does not naturally ſuggeſt the idea of a ſquare, but rather of a croſs; as that large ſpace between the arms and the ground, muſt be filled with ſomething before it can make any body think of a ſquare. Thirdly, ſeveral buildings are by no means of the form of that particular ſquare, which are notwithſtanding planned by the beſt architects, and produce an effect altogether as good, and perhaps a better. And certainly nothing could be more unaccountably whimſical, than for an architect to model his performance by the human figure, ſince no two things can have leſs reſemblance or analogy, than a man, and an houſe or temple:

temple: do we need to obſerve, that their purpoſes are entirely different? What I am apt to ſuſpect is this: that theſe analogies were deviſed to give a credit to the works of art, by ſhewing a conformity between them and the nobleſt works in nature; not that the latter ſerved at all to ſupply hints for the perfection of the former. And I am the more fully convinced, that the patrons of proportion have transferred their artificial ideas to nature, and not borrowed from thence the proportions they uſe in works of art; becauſe in any diſcuſſion of this ſubject they always quit as ſoon as poſſible the open field of natural beauties, the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and fortify themſelves within the artificial lines and angles of architecture. For there is in mankind an unfortunate propenſity to make themſelves, their views, and their works, the meaſure of excellence in every thing whatſoever. Therefore having obſerved that their dwellings were moſt com-

commodious and firm when they were thrown into regular figures, with parts anſwerable to each other; they tranſferred theſe ideas to their gardens; they turned their trees into pillars, pyramids, and obeliſks; they formed their hedges into ſo many green walls, and faſhioned the walks into ſquares, triangles, and other mathematical figures, with exactneſs and ſymmetry; and they thought, if they were not imitating, they were at leaſt improving nature, and teaching her to know her buſineſs. But nature has at laſt eſcaped from their diſcipline and their fetters; and our gardens, if nothing elſe, declare, we begin to feel that mathematical ideas are not the true meaſures of beauty. And ſurely they are full as little ſo in the animal, as the vegetable world. For is it not extraordinary, that in theſe fine deſcriptive pieces, theſe innumerable odes and elegies which are in the mouths of all the world, and many of which have been the entertainment of

ages, that in theſe pieces which deſcribe love with ſuch a paſſionate energy, and repreſent its object in ſuch an infinite variety of lights, not one word is ſaid of proportion, if it be, what ſome inſiſt it is, the principal component of beauty; whilſt at the ſame time, ſeveral other qualities are very frequently and warmly mentioned? But if proportion has not this power, it may appear odd how men came originally to be ſo prepoſſeſſed in its favour. It aroſe, I imagine, from the fondneſs I have juſt mentioned, which men bear ſo remarkably to their own works and notions; it aroſe from falſe reaſonings on the effects of the cuſtomary figure of animals; it aroſe from the Platonic theory of fitneſs and aptitude. For which reaſon, in the next ſection, I ſhall conſider the effects of cuſtom in the figure of animals; and afterwards the idea of fitneſs: ſince if proportion does not operate by a natural power attending ſome meaſures, it muſt be

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either by cuſtom, or the idea of utility; there is no other way.

SECT. V.

Proportion further conſidered.

IF I am not miſtaken, a great deal of the prejudice in favour of proportion has ariſen, not ſo much from the obſervation of any certain meaſures found in beautiful bodies, as from a wrong idea of the relation which deformity bears to beauty, to which it has been conſidered as the oppoſite; on this principle it was concluded, that where the cauſes of deformity were removed, beauty muſt naturally and neceſſarily be introduced. This I believe is a miſtake. For *deformity* is oppoſed not to beauty, but to the *complete, common form.* If one of the legs of a man be found ſhorter than the other, the man is deformed; becauſe there is ſomething wanting to com-

complete the whole idea we form of a man; and this has the ſame effect in natural faults, as maiming and mutilation produce from accidents. So if the back be humped, the man is deformed; becauſe his back has an unuſual figure, and what carries with it the idea of ſome diſeaſe or misfortune; ſo if a man's neck be conſiderably longer or ſhorter than uſual, we ſay he is deformed in that part, becauſe men are not commonly made in that manner. But ſurely every hour's experience may convince us, that a man may have his legs of an equal length, and reſembling each other in all reſpects, and his neck of a juſt ſize, and his back quite ſtrait, without having at the ſame time the leaſt perceivable beauty. Indeed beauty is ſo far from belonging to the idea of cuſtom, that in reality what affects us in that manner is extremely rare and uncommon. The beautiful ſtrikes us as much by its novelty as the deformed itſelf. It is thus in thoſe ſpe-

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cies of animals with which we are acquainted; and if one of a new ſpecies were repreſented, we ſhould by no means wait until cuſtom had ſettled an idea of proportion, before we decided concerning its beauty or uglineſs: which ſhews that the general idea of beauty can be no more owing to cuſtomary than to natural proportion. Deformity ariſes from the want of the common proportions; but the neceſſary reſult of their exiſtence in any object is not beauty. If we ſuppoſe proportion in natural things to be relative to cuſtom and uſe, the nature of uſe and cuſtom will ſhew, that beauty, which is a *poſitive* and powerful quality, cannot reſult from it. We are ſo wonderfully formed, that, whilſt we are creatures vehemently deſirous of novelty, we are as ſtrongly attached to habit and cuſtom. But it is the nature of things which hold us by cuſtom, to affect us very little whilſt we are in poſſeſſion of them, but ſtrongly when

they

they are abſent. I remember to have frequented a certain place, every day for a long time together; and I may truly ſay, that ſo far from finding pleaſure in it, I was affected with a ſort of wearineſs and diſguſt; I came, I went, I returned, without pleaſure; yet if by any means I paſſed by the uſual time of my going thither, I was remarkably uneaſy, and was not quiet till I had got into my old track. They who uſe ſnuff, take it almoſt without being ſenſible that they take it, and the acute ſenſe of ſmell is deadened, ſo as to feel hardly any thing from ſo ſharp a ſtimulus; yet deprive the ſnuff-taker of his box, and he is the moſt uneaſy mortal in the world. Indeed ſo far are uſe and habit from being cauſes of pleaſure, merely as ſuch, that the effect of conſtant uſe is to make all things of whatever kind entirely unaffecting. For as uſe at laſt takes off the painful effect of many things, it reduces the pleaſurable effect of others in

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the ſame manner, and brings both to a ſort of mediocrity and indifference. Very juſtly is uſe called a ſecond nature; and our natural and common ſtate is one of abſolute indifference, equally prepared for pain or pleaſure. But when we are thrown out of this ſtate, or deprived of any thing requiſite to maintain us in it: when this chance does not happen by pleaſure from ſome mechanical cauſe, we are always hurt. It is ſo with the ſecond nature, cuſtom, in all things which relate to it. Thus the want of the uſual proportions in men and other animals is ſure to diſguſt, though their preſence is by no means any cauſe of real pleaſure. It is true, that the proportions laid down as cauſes of beauty in the human body, are frequently found in beautiful ones, becauſe they are generally found in all mankind; but if it can be ſhewn too, that they are found without beauty, and that beauty frequently exiſts without them, and that this beauty, where it exiſts, always can be

assigned to other leſs equivocal cauſes, it will naturally lead us to conclude, that proportion and beauty are not ideas of the ſame nature. The true oppoſite to beauty is not diſproportion or deformity, but *uglineſs*; and as it proceeds from cauſes oppoſite to thoſe of poſitive beauty, we cannot conſider it until we come to treat of that. Between beauty and ugliness there is a ſort of mediocrity, in which the aſſigned proportions are moſt commonly found; but this has no effect upon the paſſions.

SECT. VI.

FITNESS not the cauſe of BEAUTY.

IT is ſaid that the idea of utility, or of a part's being well adapted to anſwer its end, is the cauſe of beauty, or indeed beauty itſelf. If it were not for this opinion, it had been impoſſible for the doctrine of proportion to have held its

ground

ground very long; the world would be ſoon weary of hearing of meaſures which related to nothing, either of a natural principle, or of a fitneſs to anſwer ſome end; the idea which mankind moſt commonly conceive of proportion, is the ſuitableneſs of means to certain ends, and, where this is not the queſtion, very ſeldom trouble themſelves about the effect of different meaſures of things. Therefore it was neceſſary for this theory to inſiſt, that not only artificial, but natural objects took their beauty from the fitneſs of the parts for their ſeveral purpoſes. But in framing this theory, I am apprehenſive that experience was not ſufficiently conſulted. For, on that principle, the wedge-like ſnout of a ſwine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little ſunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, ſo well adapted to its offices of digging and rooting, would be extremely beautiful. The great bag hanging to the bill of a pelican, a

thing

thing highly uſeful to this animal, would be likewiſe as beautiful in our eyes. The hedgehog, ſo well ſecured againſt all aſſaults by his prickly hide, and the porcupine with his miſſile quills, would be then conſidered as creatures of no ſmall elegance. There are few animals whoſe parts are better contrived than thoſe of a monkey; he has the hands of a man, joined to the ſpringy limbs of a beaſt; he is admirably calculated for running, leaping, grappling, and climbing; and yet there are few animals which ſeem to have leſs beauty in the eyes of all mankind. I need ſay little on the trunk of the elephant, of ſuch various uſefulneſs, and which is ſo far from contributing to his beauty. How well fitted is the wolf for running and leaping! how admirably is the lion armed for battle! but will any one therefore call the elephant, the wolf, and the lion, beautiful animals? I believe nobody will think the form of a man's legs ſo well

adapted to running, as thoſe of an horſe, a dog, a deer, and ſeveral other creatures; at leaſt they have not that appearance: yet, I believe, a well-faſhioned human leg will be allowed far to exceed all theſe in beauty. If the fitneſs of parts was what conſtituted the lovelineſs of their form, the actual employment of them would undoubtedly much augment it; but this, though it is ſometimes ſo upon another principle, is far from being always the caſe. A bird on the wing is not ſo beautiful as when it is perched; nay, there are ſeveral of the domeſtic fowls which are ſeldom ſeen to fly, and which are nothing the leſs beautiful on that account; yet birds are ſo extremely different in their form from the beaſt and human kinds, that you cannot, on the principle of fitneſs, allow them any thing agreeable, but in conſideration of their parts being deſigned for quite other purpoſes. I never in my life chanced to ſee a peacock fly; and yet before,

fore, very long before I conſidered any aptitude in his form for the aerial life, I was ſtruck with the extreme beauty which raiſes that bird above many of the beſt flying fowls in the world; though, for any thing I ſaw, his way of living was much like that of the ſwine, which fed in the farm-yard along with him. The ſame may be ſaid of cocks, hens, and the like; they are of the flying kind in figure; in their manner of moving not very different from men and beaſts. To leave theſe foreign examples; if beauty in our own ſpecies was annexed to uſe, men would be much more lovely than women; and ſtrength and agility would be conſidered as the only beauties. But to call ſtrength by the name of beauty, to have but one denomination for the qualities of a Venus and Hercules, ſo totally different in almoſt all reſpects, is ſurely a ſtrange confuſion of ideas, or abuſe of words. The cauſe of this confuſion, I imagine, proceeds from our fre-

quently perceiving the parts of the human and other animal bodies to be at once very beautiful, and very well adapted to their purpoſes; and we are deceived by a ſophiſm, which makes us take that for a cauſe which is only a concomitant: this is the ſophiſm of the fly; who imagined he raiſed a great duſt, becauſe he ſtood upon the chariot that really raiſed it. The ſtomach, the lungs, the liver, as well as other parts, are incomparably well adapted to their purpoſes; yet they are far from having any beauty. Again, many things are very beautiful, in which it is impoſſible to diſcern any idea of uſe. And I appeal to the firſt and moſt natural feelings of mankind, whether, on beholding a beautiful eye, or a well-faſhioned mouth, or a well-turned leg, any ideas of their being well fitted for ſeeing, eating, or running, ever preſent themſelves. What idea of uſe is it that flowers excite, the moſt beautiful part of the vegetable world? It is true, that the

infinitely wiſe and good Creator has, of his bounty, frequently joined beauty to thoſe things which he has made uſeful to us: but this does not prove that an idea of uſe and beauty are the ſame thing, or that they are any way dependent on each other.

SECT. VII.

The real effects of FITNESS.

WHEN I excluded proportion and fitneſs from any ſhare in beauty, I did not by any means intend to ſay that they were of no value, or that they ought to be diſregarded in works of art. Works of art are the proper ſphere of their power; and here it is that they have their full effect. Whenever the wiſdom of our Creator intended that we ſhould be affected with any thing, he did not confine the execution of his deſign to the languid and precarious ope-

ration of our reaſon; but he endued it with powers and properties that prevent the underſtanding, and even the will, which ſeizing upon the ſenſes and imagination, captivate the ſoul before the underſtanding is ready either to join with them, or to oppoſe them. It is by a long deduction and much ſtudy that we diſcover the adorable wiſdom of God in his works: when we diſcover it, the effect is very different, not only in the manner of acquiring it, but in its own nature, from that which ſtrikes us without any preparation from the ſublime or the beautiful. How different is the ſatisfaction of an anatomiſt, who diſcovers the uſe of the muſcles and of the ſkin, the excellent contrivance of the one for the various movements of the body, and the wonderful texture of the other, at once a general covering, and at once a general outlet as well as inlet; how different is this from the affection which poſſeſſes an ordinary man at the

ſight of a delicate ſmooth ſkin, and all the other parts of beauty, which require no inveſtigation to be perceived! In the former caſe, whilſt we look up to the Maker with admiration and praiſe, the object which cauſes it may be odious and diſtaſteful; the latter very often ſo touches us by its power on the imagination, that we examine but little into the artifice of its contrivance; and we have need of a ſtrong effort of our reaſon to diſentangle our minds from the allurements of the object, to a conſideration of that wiſdom which invented ſo powerful a machine. The effect of proportion and fitneſs, at leaſt ſo far as they proceed from a mere conſideration of the work itſelf, produce approbation, the acquieſcence of the underſtanding, but not love, nor any paſſion of that ſpecies. When we examine the ſtructure of a watch, when we come to know thoroughly the uſe of every part of it, ſatisfied as we are with the fit-

neſs of the whole, we are far enough from perceiving any thing like beauty in the watch-work itſelf; but let us look on the caſe, the labour of ſome curious artiſt in engraving, with little or no idea of uſe, we ſhall have a much livelier idea of beauty than we ever could have had from the watch itſelf, though the maſter-piece of Graham. In beauty, as I ſaid, the effect is previous to any knowledge of the uſe; but to judge of proportion, we muſt know the end for which any work is deſigned. According to the end, the proportion varies. Thus there is one proportion of a tower, another of an houſe; one proportion of a gallery, another of an hall, another of a chamber. To judge of the proportions of theſe, you muſt be firſt acquainted with the purpoſes for which they were deſigned. Good ſenſe and experience acting together, find out what is fit to be done in every work of art. We are rational creatures, and in all our

works we ought to regard their end and purpoſe; the gratification of any paſſion, how innocent ſoever, ought only to be of ſecondary conſideration. Herein is placed the real power of fitneſs and proportion; they operate on the underſtanding conſidering them, which *approves* the work and acquieſces in it. The paſſions, and the imagination which principally raiſes them, have here very little to do. When a room appears in its original nakedneſs, bare walls and a plain ceiling; let its proportion be ever ſo excellent, it pleaſes very little; a cold approbation is the utmoſt we can reach; a much worſe-proportioned room with elegant mouldings and fine feſtoons, glaſſes, and other merely ornamental furniture, will make the imagination revolt againſt the reaſon; it will pleaſe much more than the naked proportion of the firſt room, which the underſtanding has ſo much approved, as admirably fitted for its purpoſes. What I have

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here ſaid and before concerning proportion, is by no means to perſuade people abſurdly to neglect the idea of uſe in the works of art. It is only to ſhew, that theſe excellent things, beauty and proportion, are not the ſame; not that they ſhould either of them be diſregarded.

SECT. VIII.

The RECAPITULATION.

ON the whole; if ſuch parts in human bodies as are found proportioned, were likewiſe conſtantly found beautiful, as they certainly are not; or if they were ſo ſituated, as that a pleaſure might flow from the compariſon, which they ſeldom are; or if any aſſignable proportions were found, either in plants or animals, which were always attended with beauty, which never was the caſe; or if, where parts were well adapted to their purpoſes, they were con-

conſtantly beautiful, and when no uſe appeared, there was no beauty, which is contrary to all experience; we might conclude, that beauty conſiſted in proportion or utility. But ſince, in all reſpects, the caſe is quite otherwiſe; we may be ſatisfied that beauty does not depend on theſe, let it owe its origin to what elſe it will.

SECT. IX.

Perfection not the cauſe of BEAUTY.

THERE is another notion current, pretty cloſely allied to the former; that *Perfection* is the conſtituent cauſe of beauty. This opinion has been made to extend much farther than to ſenſible objects. But in theſe, ſo far is perfection, conſidered as ſuch, from being the cauſe of beauty; that this quality, where it is higheſt in the female ſex, almoſt always carries with it an idea of weakneſs

neſs and imperfection. Women are very ſenſible of this; for which reaſon, they learn to liſp, to totter in their walk, to counterfeit weakneſs, and even ſickneſs. In all this they are guided by nature. Beauty in diſtreſs is much the moſt affecting beauty. Bluſhing has little leſs power; and modeſty in general, which is a tacit allowance of imperfection, is itſelf conſidered as an amiable quality, and certainly heightens every other that is ſo. I know it is in every body's mouth, that we ought to love perfection. This is to me a ſufficient proof, that it is not the proper object of love. Who ever ſaid we *ought* to love a fine woman, or even any of theſe beautiful animals which pleaſe us? Here to be affected, there is no need of the concurrence of our will.

SECT.

SECT. X.

How far the idea of BEAUTY may be applied to the qualities of the MIND.

NOR is this remark in general leſs applicable to the qualities of the mind. Thoſe virtues which cauſe admiration, and are of the ſublimer kind, produce terror rather than love; ſuch as fortitude, juſtice, wiſdom, and the like. Never was any man amiable by force of theſe qualities. Thoſe which engage our hearts, which impreſs us with a ſenſe of lovelineſs, are the ſofter virtues; eaſineſs of temper, compaſſion, kindneſs, and liberality; though certainly thoſe latter are of leſs immediate and momentous concern to ſociety, and of leſs dignity. But it is for that reaſon that they are ſo amiable. The great virtues turn principally on dangers, puniſhments, and troubles, and are exerciſed rather in

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preventing the worſt miſchiefs, than in diſpenſing favours; and are therefore not lovely, though highly venerable. The ſubordinate turn on reliefs, gratifications, and indulgences; and are therefore more lovely, though inferior in dignity. Thoſe perſons who creep into the hearts of moſt people, who are choſen as the companions of their ſofter hours, and their reliefs from care and anxiety, are never perſons of ſhining qualities nor ſtrong virtues. It is rather the ſoft green of the ſoul on which we reſt our eyes, that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects. It is worth obſerving how we feel ourſelves affected in reading the characters of Cæſar and Cato, as they are ſo finely drawn and contraſted in Salluſt. In one the *ignoſcendo*, *largiundo*; in the other, *nil largiundo*. In one the *miſeris perfugium*; in the other *malis perniciem*. In the latter we have much to admire, much to reverence, and perhaps ſomething to fear; we

reſpect

reſpect him, but we reſpect him at a diſtance. The former makes us familiar with him; we love him, and he leads us whither he pleaſes. To draw things cloſer to our firſt and moſt natural feelings, I will add a remark made upon reading this ſection by an ingenious friend. The authority of a father, ſo uſeful to our well-being, and ſo juſtly venerable upon all accounts, hinders us from having that entire love for him that we have for our mothers, where the parental authority is almoſt melted down into the mother's fondneſs and indulgence. But we generally have a great love for our grandfathers, in whom this authority is removed a degree from us, and where the weakneſs of age mellows it into ſomething of a feminine partiality.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

How far the idea of BEAUTY may be applied to VIRTUE.

FROM what has been ſaid in the foregoing ſection, we may eaſily ſee, how far the application of beauty to virtue may be made with propriety. The general application of this quality to virtue, has a ſtrong tendency to confound our ideas of things; and it has given riſe to an infinite deal of whimſical theory; as the affixing the name of beauty to proportion, congruity, and perfection, as well as to qualities of things yet more remote from our natural ideas of it, and from one another, has tended to confound our ideas of beauty, and left us no ſtandard or rule to judge by, that was not even more uncertain and fallacious than our own fancies. This looſe and inaccurate man-

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ner of ſpeaking, has therefore miſled us both in the theory of taſte and of morals; and induced us to remove the ſcience of our duties from their proper baſis, (our reaſon, our relations, and our neceſſities,) to reſt it upon foundations altogether viſionary and unſubſtantial.

SECT. XII.

The real cauſe of BEAUTY.

HAVING endeavoured to ſhew what beauty is not, it remains that we ſhould examine, at leaſt with equal attention, in what it really conſiſts. Beauty is a thing much too affecting not to depend upon ſome poſitive qualities. And, ſince it is no creature of our reaſon, ſince it ſtrikes us without any reference to uſe, and even where no uſe at all can be diſcerned, ſince the order and method of nature is generally very different from our meaſures and

proportions, we muſt conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, ſome quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the ſenſes. We ought therefore to conſider attentively in what manner thoſe ſenſible qualities are diſpoſed, in ſuch things as by experience we find beautiful, or which excite in us the paſſion of love, or ſome correſpondent affection.

SECT. XIII.

Beautiful objects ſmall.

THE moſt obvious point that preſents itſelf to us in examining any object, is its extent or quantity. And what degree of extent prevails in bodies that are held beautiful, may be gathered from the uſual manner of expreſſion concerning it. I am told that, in moſt languages, the objects of love are ſpoken of under diminutive epithets.

It is ſo in all the languages of which I have any knowledge. In Greek the *ιων* and other diminutive terms are almoſt always the terms of affection and tenderneſs. Theſe diminutives were commonly added by the Greeks, to the names of perſons with whom they converſed on the terms of friendſhip and familiarity. Though the Romans were a people of leſs quick and delicate feelings, yet they naturally ſlid into the leſſening termination upon the ſame occaſions. Anciently in the Engliſh language the diminiſhing *ling* was added to the names of perſons and things that were the objects of love. Some we retain ſtill, as *darling* (or little dear), and a few others. But to this day, in ordinary converſation, it is uſual to add the endearing name of *little* to every thing we love: the French and Italians make uſe of theſe affectionate diminutives even more than we. In the animal creation, out of our own ſpecies, it is the ſmall

we are inclined to be fond of; little birds, and ſome of the ſmaller kinds of beaſts. A great beautiful thing is a manner of expreſſion ſcarcely ever uſed; but that of a great ugly thing, is very common. There is a wide difference between admiration and love. The ſublime, which is the cauſe of the former, always dwells on great objects, and terrible; the latter on ſmall ones, and pleaſing; we ſubmit to what we admire, but we love what ſubmits to us; in one caſe we are forced, in the other we are flattered, into compliance. In ſhort, the ideas of the ſublime and the beautiful ſtand on foundations ſo different, that it is hard, I had almoſt ſaid impoſſible, to think of reconciling them in the ſame ſubject, without conſiderably leſſening the effect of the one or the other upon the paſſions. So that, attending to their quantity, beautiful objects are comparatively ſmall.

SECT.

SECT. XIV.

SMOOTHNESS.

THE next property conſtantly obſervable in ſuch objects is * *Smoothneſs:* A quality ſo eſſential to beauty, that I do not now recollect any thing beautiful that is not ſmooth. In trees and flowers, ſmooth leaves are beautiful; ſmooth ſlopes of earth in gardens; ſmooth ſtreams in the landſcape; ſmooth coats of birds and beaſts in animal beauties; in fine women, ſmooth ſkins; and in ſeveral ſorts of ornamental furniture, ſmooth and poliſhed ſurfaces. A very conſiderable part of the effect of beauty is owing to this quality; indeed the moſt conſiderable. For take any beautiful object, and give it a broken and rugged ſurface; and however well formed it may be in other reſpects, it pleaſes no

* Part IV. ſect. 21.

longer. Whereas, let it want ever ſo many of the other conſtituents, if it wants not this, it becomes more pleaſing than almoſt all the others without it. This ſeems to me ſo evident, that I am a good deal ſurpriſed, that none who have handled the ſubject have made any mention of the quality of ſmoothneſs, in the enumeration of thoſe that go to the forming of beauty. For indeed any rugged, any ſudden projection, any ſharp angle, is in the higheſt degree contrary to that idea.

SECT. XV.

Gradual VARIATION.

BUT as perfectly beautiful bodies are not compoſed of angular parts, ſo their parts never continue long in the ſame right line. * They vary their direction every moment, and they

* Part V. ſect. 23.

change

change under the eye by a deviation continually carrying on, but for whoſe beginning or end you will find it difficult to aſcertain a point. The view of a beautiful bird will illuſtrate this obſervation. Here we ſee the head increaſing inſenſibly to the middle, from whence it leſſens gradually until it mixes with the neck; the neck loſes itſelf in a larger ſwell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreaſes again to the tail; the tail takes a new direction; but it ſoon varies its new courſe: it blends again with the other parts; and the line is perpetually changing, above, below, upon every ſide. In this deſcription I have before me the idea of a dove; it agrees very well with moſt of the conditions of beauty. It is ſmooth and downy; its parts are (to uſe that expreſſion) melted into one another; you are preſented with no ſudden protuberance through the whole, and yet the whole is conti-

nually changing. Obſerve that part of a beautiful woman where ſhe is perhaps the moſt beautiful, about the neck and breaſts; the ſmoothneſs; the ſoftneſs; the eaſy and inſenſible ſwell; the variety of the ſurface, which is never for the ſmalleſt ſpace the ſame; the deceitful maze, through which the unſteady eye ſlides giddily, without knowing where to fix, or whither it is carried. Is not this a demonſtration of that change of ſurface, continual, and yet hardly perceptible at any point, which forms one of the great conſtituents of beauty? It gives me no ſmall pleaſure to find that I can ſtrengthen my theory in this point, by the opinion of the very ingenious Mr. Hogarth; whoſe idea of the line of beauty I take in general to be extremely juſt. But the idea of variation, without attending ſo accurately to the *manner* of the variation, has led him to conſider angular figures as beautiful; theſe figures, it is true, vary greatly; yet they

vary

vary in a ſudden and broken manner; and I do not find any natural object which is angular, and at the ſame time beautiful. Indeed few natural objects are entirely angular. But I think thoſe which approach the moſt nearly to it are the uglieſt. I muſt add too, that, ſo far as I could obſerve of nature, though the varied line is that alone in which complete beauty is found, yet there is no particular line which is always found in the moſt completely beautiful, and which is therefore beautiful in preference to all other lines. At leaſt I never could obſerve it.

SECT.

SECT. XVI.

DELICACY.

AN air of robuſtneſs and ſtrength is very prejudicial to beauty. An appearance of *delicacy*, and even of fragility, is almoſt eſſential to it. Whoever examines the vegetable or animal creation, will find this obſervation to be founded in nature. It is not the oak, the aſh, or the elm, or any of the robuſt trees of the foreſt, which we conſider as beautiful; they are awful and majeſtic; they inſpire a ſort of reverence. It is the delicate myrtle, it is the orange, it is the almond, it is the jaſmine, it is the vine, which we look on as vegetable beauties. It is the flowery ſpecies, ſo remarkable for its weakneſs and momentary duration, that gives us the livelieſt idea of beauty and elegance. Among animals, the greyhound

is

is more beautiful than the maſtiff; and the delicacy of a gennet, a barb, or an Arabian horſe, is much more amiable than the ſtrength and ſtability of ſome horſes of war or carriage. I need here ſay little of the fair ſex, where I believe the point will be eaſily allowed me. The beauty of women is conſiderably owing to their weakneſs or delicacy, and is even enhanced by their timidity, a quality of mind analogous to it. I would not here be underſtood to ſay, that weakneſs betraying very bad health has any ſhare in beauty; but the ill effect of this is not becauſe it is weakneſs, but becauſe the ill ſtate of health which produces ſuch weakneſs, alters the other conditions of beauty; the parts in ſuch a caſe collapſe; the bright colour, the *lumen purpureum juventæ*, is gone; and the fine variation is loſt in wrinkles, ſudden breaks, and right lines.

SECT.

SECT. XVII.

Beauty in COLOUR.

AS to the colours uſually found in beautiful bodies, it may be ſomewhat difficult to aſcertain them, becauſe, in the ſeveral parts of nature, there is an infinite variety. However, even in this variety, we may mark out ſomething on which to ſettle. Firſt, the colours of beautiful bodies muſt not be duſky or muddy, but clean and fair. Secondly, they muſt not be of the ſtrongeſt kind. Thoſe which ſeem moſt appropriated to beauty, are the milder of every ſort; light greens; ſoft blues; weak whites; pink reds; and violets. Thirdly, if the colours be ſtrong and vivid, they are always diverſified, and the object is never of one ſtrong colour; there are almoſt always ſuch a number of them (as in variegated flowers,) that the

ſtrength

ſtrength and glare of each is conſider-ably abated. In a fine complexion, there is not only ſome variety in the colour-ing, but the colours: neither the red nor the white are ſtrong and glaring. Beſides, they are mixed in ſuch a man-ner, and with ſuch gradations, that it is impoſſible to fix the bounds. On the ſame principle it is, that the dubious colour in the necks and tails of peacocks, and about the heads of drakes, is ſo very agreeable. In reality, the beauty both of ſhape and colouring are as nearly rela-ted, as we can well ſuppoſe it poſſible for things of ſuch different natures to be.

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

RECAPITULATION.

ON the whole, the qualities of beauty, as they are merely ſenſible qualities, are the following. Firſt, to be comparatively ſmall. Secondly, to be ſmooth. Thirdly, to have a variety in the direction of the parts; but, fourthly, to have thoſe parts not angular, but melted as it were into each other. Fifthly, to be of a delicate frame, without any remarkable appearance of ſtrength. Sixthly, to have its colours clear and bright, but not very ſtrong and glaring. Seventhly, or if it ſhould have any glaring colour, to have it diverſified with others. Theſe are, I believe, the properties on which beauty depends; properties that operate by nature, and are leſs liable to be altered by caprice, or con-

confounded by a diverſity of taſtes, than any other.

SECT. XIX.

The PHYSIOGNOMY.

THE *Phyſiognomy* has a conſiderable ſhare in beauty, eſpecially in that of our own ſpecies. The manners give a certain determination to the countenance; which being obſerved to correſpond pretty regularly with them, is capable of joining the effects of certain agreeable qualities of the mind to thoſe of the body. So that to form a finiſhed human beauty, and to give it its full influence, the face muſt be expreſſive of ſuch gentle and amiable qualities, as correſpond with the ſoftneſs, ſmoothneſs, and delicacy of the outward form.

SECT. XX.

The EYE.

I HAVE hitherto purpoſely omitted to ſpeak of the *Eye*, which has ſo great a ſhare in the beauty of the animal creation, as it did not fall ſo eaſily under the foregoing heads, though in fact it is reducible to the ſame principles. I think then, that the beauty of the eye conſiſts, firſt, in its *clearneſs*; what *coloured* eye ſhall pleaſe moſt, depends a good deal on particular fancies; but none are pleaſed with an eye whoſe water (to uſe that term) is dull and muddy*. We are pleaſed with the eye in this view, on the principle upon which we like diamonds, clear water, glaſs, and ſuch like tranſparent ſubſtances. Secondly, the motion of the eye contributes to its beauty, by continually ſhifting its direction;

* Part IV. ſect. 25.

rection; but a flow and languid motion is more beautiful than a briſk one; the latter is enlivening; the former lovely. Thirdly, with regard to the union of the eye with the neighbouring parts, it is to hold the ſame rule that is given of other beautiful ones; it is not to make a ſtrong deviation from the line of the neighbouring parts; nor to verge into any exact geometrical figure. Beſides all this, the eye affects, as it is expreſſive of ſome qualities of the mind, and its principal power generally ariſes from this; ſo that what we have juſt ſaid of the phyſiognomy is applicable here.

SECT. XXI.

UGLINESS.

IT may perhaps appear like a ſort of repetition of what we have before ſaid, to inſiſt here upon the nature of *Uglineſs*. As I imagine it to be in all

reſpects the oppoſite to thoſe qualities which we have laid down for the conſtituents of beauty. But though uglineſs be the oppoſite to beauty, it is not the oppoſite to proportion and fitneſs. For it is poſſible that a thing may be very ugly with any proportions, and with a perfect fitneſs to any uſes. Uglineſs I imagine likewiſe to be conſiſtent enough with an idea of the ſublime. But I would by no means inſinuate that uglineſs of itſelf is a ſublime idea, unleſs united with ſuch qualities as excite a ſtrong terror.

SECT. XXII.

GRACE.

GRACEFULNESS is an idea not very different from beauty; it conſiſts in much the ſame things. Gracefulneſs is an idea belonging to *poſture* and *motion*. In both theſe, to be graceful, it

is

is requiſite that there be no appearance of difficulty; there is required a ſmall inflection of the body; and a compoſure of the parts in ſuch a manner, as not to incumber each other, not to appear divided by ſharp and ſudden angles. In this eaſe, this roundneſs, this delicacy of attitude and motion it is that all the magic of grace conſiſts, and what is called its *je ne ſçai quoi*; as will be obvious to any obſerver, who conſiders attentively the Venus de Medicis, the Antinous, or any ſtatue generally allowed to be graceful in an high degree.

SECT. XXIII.

ELEGANCE and SPECIOUSNESS.

WHEN any body is compoſed of parts ſmooth and poliſhed, without preſſing upon each other, without ſhewing any ruggedneſs or confuſion, and at the ſame time affecting ſome *re-*

gular ſhape, I call it *elegant*. It is cloſely allied to the beautiful, differing from it only in this *regularity*; which however, as it makes a very material difference in the affection produced, may very well conſtitute another ſpecies. Under this head I rank thoſe delicate and regular works of art, that imitate no determinate object in nature, as elegant buildings, and pieces of furniture. When any object partakes of the abovementioned qualities, or of thoſe of beautiful bodies, and is withal of great dimenſions, it is full as remote from the idea of mere beauty, I call it *fine* or *ſpecious*.

SECT.

SECT. XXIV.

The beautiful in FEELING.

THE foregoing deſcription of beauty, ſo far as it is taken in by the eye, may be greatly illuſtrated by deſcribing the nature of objects, which produce a ſimilar effect through the touch. This I call the beautiful in *Feeling*. It correſponds wonderfully with what cauſes the ſame ſpecies of pleaſure to the ſight. There is a chain in all our ſenſations; they are all but different ſorts of feelings, calculated to be affected by various ſorts of objects, but all to be affected after the ſame manner. All bodies that are pleaſant to the touch, are ſo by the ſlightneſs of the reſiſtance they make. Reſiſtance is either to motion along the ſurface, or to the preſſure of the parts on one another: if the former be ſlight, we call the body ſmooth; if the latter,

ſoft. The chief pleaſure we receive by feeling, is in the one or the other of theſe qualities; and if there be a combination of both, our pleaſure is greatly increaſed. This is ſo plain, that it is rather more fit to illuſtrate other things, than to be illuſtrated itſelf by an example. The next ſource of pleaſure in this ſenſe, as in every other, is the continually preſenting ſomewhat new; and we find that bodies which continually vary their ſurface, are much the moſt pleaſant or beautiful to the feeling, as any one that pleaſes may experience. The third property in ſuch objects is, that though the ſurface continually varies its direction, it never varies it ſuddenly. The application of any thing ſudden, even though the impreſſion itſelf have little or nothing of violence, is diſagreeable. The quick application of a finger a little warmer or colder than uſual, without notice, makes us ſtart; a ſlight tap on the ſhoulder, not ex-

pected,

pected, has the ſame effect. Hence it is that angular bodies, bodies that ſuddenly vary the direction of the outline, afford ſo little pleaſure to the feeling. Every ſuch change is a ſort of climbing or falling in miniature; ſo that ſquares, triangles, and other angular figures are neither beautiful to the ſight nor feeling. Whoever compares his ſtate of mind, on feeling ſoft, ſmooth, variegated, unangular bodies, with that in which he finds himſelf, on the view of a beautiful object, will perceive a very ſtriking analogy in the effects of both; and which may go a good way towards diſcovering their common cauſe. Feeling and ſight, in this reſpect, differ in but a few points. The touch takes in the pleaſure of ſoftneſs, which is not primarily an object of ſight; the ſight, on the other hand, comprehends colour, which can hardly be made perceptible to the touch: the touch again has the advantage in a new idea of pleaſure reſulting from a mode-

rate degree of warmth; but the eye triumphs in the infinite extent and multiplicity of its objects. But there is ſuch a ſimilitude in the pleaſures of theſe ſenſes, that I am apt to fancy, if it were poſſible that one might diſcern colour by feeling (as it is ſaid ſome blind men have done), that the ſame colours, and the ſame diſpoſition of colouring, which are found beautiful to the ſight, would be found likewiſe moſt grateful to the touch. But, ſetting aſide conjectures, let us paſs to the other ſenſe; of hearing.

SECT. XXV.

The beautiful in SOUNDS.

IN this ſenſe we find an equal aptitude to be affected in a ſoft and delicate manner; and how far ſweet or beautiful ſounds agree with our deſcriptions of beauty in other ſenſes, the experience of every one muſt decide.

Milton has deſcribed this ſpecies of muſic in one of his juvenile poems*. I need not ſay that Milton was perfectly well verſed in that art; and that no man had a finer ear, with a happier manner of expreſſing the affections of one ſenſe by metaphors taken from another. The deſcription is as follows:

——*And ever againſt eating cares,*
Lap me in ſoft *Lydian airs*;
In notes with many a winding *bout*
Of linked ſweetneſs long drawn *out*;
With wanton head and giddy cunning,
The melting *voice through* mazes *running*;
Untwiſting *all the chains that tie*
The hidden ſoul of harmony.

Let us parallel this with the ſoftneſs, the winding ſurface, the unbroken continuance, the eaſy gradation of the beautiful in other things; and all the diverſi-

* L'allegro.

ties

ties of the ſeveral ſenſes, with all their ſeveral affections, will rather help to throw lights from one another to finiſh one clear, conſiſtent idea of the whole, than to obſcure it by their intricacy and variety.

To the above-mentioned deſcription I ſhall add one or two remarks. The firſt is; that the beautiful in muſic will not bear that loudneſs and ſtrength of ſounds, which may be uſed to raiſe other paſſions; nor notes, which are ſhrill or harſh, or deep; it agrees beſt with ſuch as are clear, even, ſmooth, and weak. The ſecond is; that great variety, and quick tranſitions from one meaſure or tone to another, are contrary to the genius of the beautiful in muſic. Such * tranſitions often excite mirth, or other ſudden and tumultuous paſſions; but not that ſinking, that melting, that languor, which is the characteriſtical effect of the

* I ne'er am merry, when I hear ſweet muſic.
SHAKESPEAR.

beautiful as it regards every ſenſe. The paſſion excited by beauty is in fact nearer to a ſpecies of melancholy, than to jollity and mirth. I do not here mean to confine muſic to any one ſpecies of notes, or tones, neither is it an art in which I can ſay I have any great ſkill. My ſole deſign in this remark is, to ſettle a conſiſtent idea of beauty. The infinite variety of the affections of the ſoul will ſuggeſt to a good head, and ſkilful ear, a variety of ſuch ſounds as are fitted to raiſe them. It can be no prejudice to this, to clear and diſtinguiſh ſome few particulars, that belong to the ſame claſs, and are conſiſtent with each other, from the immenſe crowd of different, and ſometimes contradictory ideas, that rank vulgarly under the ſtandard of beauty. And of theſe it is my intention to mark ſuch only of the leading points as ſhew the conformity of the ſenſe of hearing, with all the other ſenſes in the article of their pleaſures.

SECT.

SECT. XXVI.

TASTE and SMELL.

THIS general agreement of the ſenſes is yet more evident on minutely conſidering thoſe of taſte and ſmell. We metaphorically apply the idea of ſweetneſs to ſights and ſounds; but as the qualities of bodies by which they are fitted to excite either pleaſure or pain in theſe ſenſes, are not ſo obvious as they are in the others, we ſhall refer an explanation of their analogy, which is a very cloſe one, to that part, wherein we come to conſider the common efficient cauſe of beauty, as it regards all the ſenſes. I do not think any thing better fitted to eſtabliſh a clear and ſettled idea of viſual beauty than this way of examining the ſimilar pleaſures of other ſenſes; for one part is ſometimes clear in one of theſe ſenſes, that is more obſcure

obſcure in another; and where there is a clear concurrence of all, we may with more certainty ſpeak of any one of them. By this means, they bear witneſs to each other; nature is, as it were, ſcrutinized; and we report nothing of her but what we receive from her own information.

SECT. XXVII.

The Sublime and Beautiful compared.

ON cloſing this general view of beauty, it naturally occurs, that we ſhould compare it with the ſublime; and in this compariſon there appears a remarkable contraſt. For ſublime objects are vaſt in their dimenſions, beautiful ones comparatively ſmall: beauty ſhould be ſmooth and poliſhed; the great, rugged and negligent: beauty ſhould ſhun the right line, yet deviate from it inſenſibly; the great in many

caſes

caſes loves the right line; and when it deviates, it often makes a ſtrong deviation: beauty ſhould not be obſcure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy: beauty ſhould be light and delicate; the great ought to be ſolid, and even maſſive. They are indeed ideas of a very different nature, one being founded on pain, the other on pleaſure; and however they may vary afterwards from the direct nature of their cauſes, yet theſe cauſes keep up an eternal diſtinction between them, a diſtinction never to be forgotten by any whoſe buſineſs it is to affect the paſſions. In the infinite variety of natural combinations, we muſt expect to find the qualities of things the moſt remote imaginable from each other united in the ſame object. We muſt expect alſo to find combinations of the ſame kind in the works of art. But when we conſider the power of an object upon our paſſions, we muſt know that when any thing is intended to affect the

mind

mind by the force of ſome predominant property, the affection produced is like to be the more uniform and perfect, if all the other properties or qualities of the object be of the ſame nature, and tending to the ſame deſign as the principal;

If black and white blend, ſoften, and unite,
A thouſand ways, are there no black and white?

If the qualities of the ſublime and beautiful are ſometimes found united, does this prove that they are the ſame; does it prove that they are any way allied; does it prove even that they are not oppoſite and contradictory? Black and white may ſoften, may blend; but they are not therefore the ſame. Nor, when they are ſo ſoftened and blended with each other, or with different colours, is the power of black as black, or of white as white, ſo ſtrong as when each ſtands uniform and diſtinguiſhed.

The End of the Third Part.

A Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

PART IV.

SECT. I.

Of the efficient cauſe of the SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

WHEN I ſay, I intend to enquire into the efficient cauſe of ſublimity and beauty, I would not be underſtood to ſay, that I can come to the ultimate cauſe. I do not pretend that I ſhall ever be able to explain, why certain affections of the body produce

ſuch a diſtinct emotion of mind, and no other; or why the body is at all affected by the mind, or the mind by the body. A little thought will ſhew this to be impoſſible. But I conceive, if we can diſcover what affections of the mind produced certain emotions of the body; and what diſtinct feelings and qualities of body ſhall produce certain determinate paſſions in the mind, and no others, I fancy a great deal will be done; ſomething not unuſeful towards a diſtinct knowledge of our paſſions, ſo far at leaſt as we have them at preſent under our conſideration. This is all, I believe, we can do. If we could advance a ſtep farther, difficulties would ſtill remain, as we ſhould be ſtill equally diſtant from the firſt cauſe. When Newton firſt diſcovered the property of attraction, and ſettled its laws, he found it ſerved very well to explain ſeveral of the moſt remarkable phænomena in nature; but yet with reference to the general ſyſtem of things, he could

conſider

conſider attraction but as an effect, whoſe cauſe at that time he did not attempt to trace. But when he afterwards began to account for it by a ſubtile elaſtic æther, this great man (if in ſo great a man it be not impious to diſcover any thing like a blemiſh) ſeemed to have quitted his uſual cautious manner of philoſophiſing; ſince, perhaps, allowing all that has been advanced on this ſubject to be ſufficiently proved, I think it leaves us with as many difficulties as it found us. That great chain of cauſes, which links one to another, even to the throne of God himſelf, can never be unravelled by any induſtry of ours. When we go but one ſtep beyond the immediately ſenſible qualities of things, we go out of our depth. All we do after is but a faint ſtruggle, that ſhews we are in an element which does not belong to us. So that when I ſpeak of cauſe, and efficient cauſe, I only mean certain affections of the mind, that cauſe certain changes in the body; or

certain powers and properties in bodies, that work a change in the mind. As if I were to explain the motion of a body falling to the ground, I would ſay it was cauſed by gravity; and I would endeavour to ſhew after what manner this power operated, without attempting to ſhew why it operated in this manner: or if I were to explain the effects of bodies ſtriking one another by the common laws of percuſſion, I ſhould not endeavour to explain how motion itſelf is communicated.

SECT. II.

ASSOCIATION.

IT is no ſmall bar in the way of our enquiry into the cauſe of our paſſions, that the occaſion of many of them are given, and that their governing motions are communicated at a time when we have not capacity to reflect on them; at a time

time of which all ſort of memory is worn out of our minds. For beſides ſuch things as affect us in various manners, according to their natural powers, there are aſſociations made at that early ſeaſon, which we find it very hard afterwards to diſtinguiſh from natural effects. Not to mention the unaccountable antipathies which we find in many perſons, we all find it impoſſible to remember when a ſteep became more terrible than a plain; or fire or water more terrible than a clod of earth; though all theſe are very probably either concluſions from experience, or ariſing from the premonitions of others; and ſome of them impreſſed, in all likelihood, pretty late. But as it muſt be allowed that many things affect us after a certain manner, not by any natural powers they have for that purpoſe, but by aſſociation; ſo it would be abſurd, on the other hand, to ſay that all things affect us by aſſociation only; ſince ſome things muſt have been originally and na-

turally agreeable or disagreeable, from which the others derive their associated powers; and it would be, I fancy, to little purpose to look for the cause of our passions in association, until we fail of it in the natural properties of things.

SECT. III.

Cause of PAIN and FEAR.

I Have before observed *, that whatever is qualified to cause terror, is a foundation capable of the sublime; to which I add, that not only these, but many things from which we cannot probably apprehend any danger, have a similar effect, because they operate in a similar manner. I observed too, that † whatever produces pleasure, positive and original pleasure, is fit to have beauty engrafted on it. Therefore, to clear up the nature of these qualities, it may be ne-

* Part I. sect. 8. † Part I. sect. 10.

cessary

ceſſary to explain the nature of pain and pleaſure on which they depend. A man who ſuffers under violent bodily pain, (I ſuppoſe the moſt violent, becauſe the effect may be the more obvious;) I ſay a man in great pain has his teeth ſet, his eyes-brows are violently contracted, his forehead is wrinkled, his eyes are dragged inwards, and rolled with great vehemence, his hair ſtands an end, the voice is forced out in ſhort ſhrieks and groans, and the whole fabric totters. Fear or terror, which is an apprehenſion of pain or death, exhibits exactly the ſame effects, approaching in violence to thoſe juſt mentioned, in proportion to the nearneſs of the cauſe, and the weakneſs of the ſubject. This is not only ſo in the human ſpecies: but I have more than once obſerved in dogs, under an apprehenſion of puniſhment, that they have writhed their bodies, and yelped, and howled, as if they had actually felt the blows. From hence I conclude,

that pain and fear act upon the same parts of the body, and in the same manner, though somewhat differing in degree: That pain and fear consist in an unnatural tension of the nerves; that this is sometimes accompanied with an unnatural strength, which sometimes suddenly changes into an extraordinary weakness; that the effects often come on alternately, and are sometimes mixed with each other. This is the nature of all conclusive agitations, especially in weaker subjects, which are the most liable to the severest impressions of pain and fear. The only difference between pain and terror is, that things which cause pain operate on the mind, by the intervention of the body; whereas things that cause terror, generally affect the bodily organs by the operation of the mind suggesting the danger; but both agreeing, either primarily, or secondarily, in producing a tension, contraction, or violent emotion of the

nerves,

nerves *, they agree likewiſe in every thing elſe. For it appears very clearly to me, from this, as well as from many other examples, that when the body is diſpoſed, by any means whatſoever, to ſuch emotions as it would acquire by the means of a certain paſſion; it will of itſelf excite ſomething very like that paſſion in the mind.

SECT. IV.

Continued.

TO this purpoſe Mr. Spon, in his Recherches d'Antiquité, gives us a curious ſtory of the celebrated phyſiognomiſt Campanella. This man, it ſeems, had not only made very accurate

* I do not here enter into the queſtion debated among phyſiologiſts, whether pain be the effect of a contraction, or a tenſion of the nerves. Either will ſerve my purpoſe; for by tenſion, I mean no more than a violent pulling of the fibres, which compoſe any muſcle or membrane, in whatever way this is done.

obſer-

obſervations on human faces, but was very expert in mimicking ſuch as were any way remarkable. When he had a mind to penetrate into the inclinations of thoſe he had to deal with, he compoſed his face, his geſture, and his whole body, as nearly as he could into the exact ſimilitude of the perſon he intended to examine; and then carefully obſerved what turn of mind he ſeemed to acquire by this change. So that, ſays my author, he was able to enter into the diſpoſitions and thoughts of people as effectually as if he had been changed into the very men. I have often obſerved, that on mimicking the looks and geſtures of angry, or placid, or frighted, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that paſſion, whoſe appearance I endeavoured to imitate; nay, I am convinced it is hard to avoid it, though one ſtrove to ſeparate the paſſion from its correſpondent geſtures. Our minds and bodies are ſo

cloſely and intimately connected, that one is incapable of pain or pleaſure without the other. Campanella, of whom we have been ſpeaking, could ſo abſtract his attention from any ſufferings of his body, that he was able to endure the rack itſelf without much pain; and in leſſer pains, every body muſt have obſerved, that when we can employ our attention on any thing elſe, the pain has been for a time ſuſpended: on the other hand, if by any means the body is indiſpoſed to perform ſuch geſtures, or to be ſtimulated into ſuch emotions as any paſſion uſually produces in it, that paſſion itſelf never can ariſe, though its cauſe ſhould be never ſo ſtrongly in action; though it ſhould be merely mental, and immediately affecting none of the ſenſes. As an opiate, or ſpirituous liquors, ſhall ſuſpend the operation of grief, or fear, or anger, in ſpite of all our efforts to the contrary; and this by inducing in the body a diſpoſition

contrary to that which it receives from theſe paſſions.

SECT. V.

How the Sublime is produced.

HAVING conſidered terror as producing an unnatural tenſion and certain violent emotions of the nerves; it eaſily follows, from what we have juſt ſaid, that whatever is fitted to produce ſuch a tenſion muſt be productive of a paſſion ſimilar to terror *, and conſequently muſt be a ſource of the ſublime, though it ſhould have no idea of danger connected with it. So that little remains towards ſhewing the cauſe of the ſublime, but to ſhew that the inſtances we have given of it in the ſecond part relate to ſuch things, as are fitted by nature to produce this ſort of tenſion, either by the primary operation of the

* Part II. ſect. 2.

mind or the body. With regard to ſuch things as affect by the aſſociated idea of danger, there can be no doubt but that they produce terror, and act by ſome modification of that paſſion; and that terror, when ſufficiently violent, raiſes the emotions of the body juſt mentioned, can as little be doubted. But if the ſublime is built on terror, or ſome paſſion like it, which has pain for its object, it is previouſly proper to enquire how any ſpecies of delight can be derived from a cauſe ſo apparently contrary to it. I ſay, *delight*, becauſe, as I have often remarked, it is very evidently different in its cauſe, and in its own nature, from actual and poſitive pleaſure.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

How pain can be a cauſe of delight.

PROVIDENCE has ſo ordered it, that a ſtate of reſt and inaction, however it may flatter our indolence, ſhould be productive of many inconveniencies; that it ſhould generate ſuch diſorders, as may force us to have recourſe to ſome labour, as a thing abſolutely requiſite to make us paſs our lives with tolerable ſatisfaction; for the nature of reſt is to ſuffer all the parts of our bodies to fall into a relaxation, that not only diſables the members from performing their functions, but takes away the vigorous tone of fibre which is requiſite for carrying on the natural and neceſſary ſecretions. At the ſame time, that in this languid inactive ſtate, the nerves are more liable to the moſt horrid convulſions, than when they are ſufficiently

ficiently braced and ſtrengthened. Melancholy, dejection, deſpair, and often ſelf-murder, is the conſequence of the gloomy view we take of things in this relaxed ſtate of body. The beſt remedy for all theſe evils is exerciſe or *labour*; and labour is a ſurmounting of *difficulties*, an exertion of the contracting power of the muſcles; and as ſuch reſembles pain, which conſiſts in tenſion or contraction, in every thing but degree. Labour is not only requiſite to preſerve the coarſer organs in a ſtate fit for their functions; but it is equally neceſſary to theſe finer and more delicate organs, on which, and by which, the imagination and perhaps the other mental powers act. Since it is probable, that not only the inferior parts of the ſoul, as the paſſions are called, but the underſtanding itſelf makes uſe of ſome fine corporeal inſtruments in its operation; though what they are, and where they are, may be ſomewhat hard to ſettle: but that it does make uſe

of

of ſuch, appears from hence; that a long exerciſe of the mental powers induces a remarkable laſſitude of the whole body; and on the other hand, that great bodily labour, or pain, weakens and ſometimes actually deſtroys the mental faculties. Now, as a due exerciſe is eſſential to the coarſe muſcular parts of the conſtitution, and that without this rouſing they would become languid and diſeaſed, the very ſame rule holds with regard to thoſe finer parts we have mentioned; to have them in proper order, they muſt be ſhaken and worked to a proper degree.

SECT. VII.

EXERCISE neceſſary for the finer organs.

AS common labour, which is a mode of pain, is the exerciſe of the groſſer, a mode of terror is the exerciſe of the finer parts of the ſyſtem;

and

and if a certain mode of pain be of ſuch a nature as to act upon the eye or the ear; as they are the moſt delicate organs, the affection approaches more nearly to that which has a mental cauſe. In all theſe caſes, if the pain and terror are ſo modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not converſant about the preſent deſtruction of the perſon, as theſe emotions clear the parts, whether fine or groſs, of a dangerous and troubleſome incumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleaſure, but a ſort of delightful horror, a ſort of tranquillity tinged with terror; which, as it belongs to ſelf-preſervation, is one of the ſtrongeſt of all the paſſions. Its object is the ſublime *. Its higheſt degree I call *aſtoniſhment*; the ſubordinate degrees are awe, reverence, and reſpect, which, by the very etymology of the words, ſhew

* Part II. ſect. 2.

from what ſource they are derived, and how they ſtand diſtinguiſhed from poſitive pleaſure.

SECT. VIII.

Why things not dangerous produce a paſſion like TERROR.

* A Mode of terror or pain is always the cauſe of the ſublime. For terror, or aſſociated danger, the foregoing explanation is, I believe, ſufficient. It will require ſomething more trouble to ſhew, that ſuch examples as I have given of the ſublime in the ſecond part, are capable of producing a mode of pain, and of being thus allied to terror, and to be accounted for on the ſame principles. And firſt of ſuch objects as are great in their dimenſions. I ſpeak of viſual objects.

* Part I. ſect. 7. Part II. ſect. 2.

SECT. IX.

Why visual objects of great dimensions are Sublime.

VISION is performed by having a picture formed by the rays of light which are reflected from the object painted in one piece, instantaneously, on the retina, or last nervous part of the eye. Or, according to others, there is but one point of any object painted on the eye in such a manner as to be perceived at once; but by moving the eye, we gather up with great celerity, the several parts of the object, so as to form one uniform piece. If the former opinion be allowed, it will be considered *, that though all the light reflected from a large body should strike the eye in one instant; yet we must suppose that the

* Part II. sect 7.

body itſelf is formed of a vaſt number of diſtinct points, every one of which, or the ray from every one, makes an impreſſion on the retina. So that, though the image of one point ſhould cauſe but a ſmall tenſion of this membrane, another, and another, and another ſtroke, muſt in their progreſs cauſe a very great one, until it arrives at laſt to the higheſt degree; and the whole capacity of the eye, vibrating in all its parts, muſt approach near to the nature of what cauſes pain, and conſequently muſt produce an idea of the ſublime. Again, if we take it, that one point only of an object is diſtinguiſhable at once; the matter will amount nearly to the ſame thing, or rather it will make the origin of the ſublime from greatneſs of dimenſion yet clearer. For if but one point is obſerved at once, the eye muſt traverſe the vaſt ſpace of ſuch bodies with great quickneſs, and conſequently the fine nerves

and muſcles deſtined to the motion of that part muſt be very much ſtrained; and their great ſenſibility muſt make them highly affected by this ſtraining. Beſides, it ſignifies juſt nothing to the effect produced, whether a body has its parts connected and makes its impreſſion at once; or, making but one impreſſion of a point at a time, it cauſes a ſucceſſion of the ſame, or others ſo quickly as to make them ſeem united; as is evident from the common effect of whirling about a lighted torch or piece of wood; which, if done with celerity, ſeems a circle of fire.

SECT. X.

UNITY why requiſite to vaſtneſs.

IT may be objected to this theory, that the eye generally receives an equal number of rays at all times, and

that therefore a great object cannot affect it by the number of rays, more than that variety of objects which the eye muſt always diſcern whilſt it remains open. But to this I anſwer, that admitting an equal number of rays, or an equal quantity of luminous particles to ſtrike the eye at all times, yet if theſe rays frequently vary their nature, now to blue, now to red, and ſo on, or their manner of termination as to a number of petty ſquares, triangles, or the like, at every change, whether of colour or ſhape, the organ has a ſort of a relaxation or reſt; but this relaxation and labour ſo often interrupted, is by no means productive of eaſe; neither has it the effect of vigorous and uniform labour. Whoever has remarked the different effects of ſome ſtrong exerciſe, and ſome little piddling action, will underſtand why a teaſing fretful employment, which at once wearies and weakens the body, ſhould

ſhould have nothing great; theſe ſorts of impulſes, which are rather teaſing than painful, by continually and ſuddenly altering their tenor and direction, prevent that full tenſion, that ſpecies of uniform labour, which is allied to ſtrong pain, and cauſes the ſublime. The ſum total of things of various kinds, though it ſhould equal the number of the uniform parts compoſing ſome *one* entire object, is not equal in its effect upon the organs of our bodies. Beſides the one already aſſigned, there is another very ſtrong reaſon for the difference. The mind in reality hardly ever can attend diligently to more than one thing at a time; if this thing be little, the effect is little, and a number of other little objects cannot engage the attention; the mind is bounded by the bounds of the object; and what is not attended to, and what does not exiſt, are much the ſame in the effect; but the eye or the mind (for in this caſe there is no difference) in

great uniform objects does not readily arrive at their bounds; it has no reſt, whilſt it contemplates them; the image is much the ſame every where. So that every thing great by its quantity muſt neceſſarily be one, ſimple and entire.

SECT. XI.

The artificial INFINITE.

WE have obſerved, that a ſpecies of greatneſs ariſes from the artificial infinite; and that this infinite conſiſts in an uniform ſucceſſion of great parts: we obſerved too, that the ſame uniform ſucceſſion had a like power in ſounds. But becauſe the effects of many things are clearer in one of the ſenſes than in another, and that all the ſenſes bear an analogy to, and illuſtrate one another, I ſhall begin with this power in ſounds, as the cauſe of the ſublimity from ſucceſſion

is

is rather more obvious in the ſenſe of hearing. And I ſhall here once for all obſerve, that an inveſtigation of the natural and mechanical cauſes of our paſſions, beſides the curioſity of the ſubject, gives, if they are diſcovered, a double ſtrength and luſtre to any rules we deliver on ſuch matters. When the ear receives any ſimple ſound, it is ſtruck by a ſingle pulſe of the air, which makes the ear-drum and the other membranous parts vibrate according to the nature and ſpecies of the ſtroke. If the ſtroke be ſtrong, the organ of hearing ſuffers a conſiderable degree of tenſion. If the ſtroke be repeated pretty ſoon after, the repetition cauſes an expectation of another ſtroke. And it muſt be obſerved, that expectation itſelf cauſes a tenſion. This is apparent in many animals, who, when they prepare for hearing any ſound, rouſe themſelves, and prick up their ears: ſo that here the effect of the ſounds is conſiderably augmented by a new auxi-

liary,

liary, the expectation. But though after a number of ſtrokes, we expect ſtill more, not being able to aſcertain the exact time of their arrival, when they arrive, they produce a ſort of ſurpriſe, which increaſes this tenſion yet further. For I have obſerved, that when at any time I have waited very earneſtly for ſome ſound, that returned at intervals, (as the ſucceſſive firing of cannon) though I fully expected the return of the ſound, when it came, it always made me ſtart a little; the ear-drum ſuffered a convulſion, and the whole body conſented with it. The tenſion of the part thus increaſing at every blow, by the united forces of the ſtroke itſelf, the expectation, and the ſurpriſe, it is worked up to ſuch a pitch as to be capable of the ſublime; it is brought juſt to the verge of pain. Even when the cauſe has ceaſed, the organs of hearing being often ſucceſſively ſtruck in a ſimilar manner, continue to vibrate in that manner for

ſome

ſome time longer; this is an additional help to the greatneſs of the effect.

SECT. XII.

The vibrations muſt be ſimilar.

BUT if the vibration be not ſimilar at every impreſſion, it can never be carried beyond the number of actual impreſſions; for move any body as a pendulum, in one way, and it will continue to oſcillate in an arch of the ſame circle, until the known cauſes make it reſt; but if after firſt putting it in motion in one direction, you puſh it into another, it can never reaſſume the firſt direction; becauſe it can never move itſelf, and conſequently it can have but the effect of that laſt motion; whereas, if in the ſame direction you act upon it ſeveral times, it will deſcribe a greater arch, and move a longer time.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

The effect of SUCCESSION in visual objects explained.

IF we can comprehend clearly how things operate upon one of our senses, there can be very little difficulty in conceiving in what manner they affect the rest. To say a great deal therefore upon the corresponding affections of every sense, would tend rather to fatigue us by an useless repetition, than to throw any new light upon the subject, by that ample and diffuse manner of treating it; but as in this discourse we chiefly attach ourselves to the sublime, as it affects the eye, we shall consider particularly why a successive disposition of uniform parts in the same right line should be sublime *, and upon what principle this disposition is enabled to make a comparatively small

* Part II. sect. 10.

quantity

quantity of matter produce a grander effect, than a much larger quantity diſpoſed in another manner. To avoid the perplexity of general notions; let us ſet before our eyes a colonnade of uniform pillars planted in a right line; let us take our ſtand in ſuch a manner, that the eye may ſhoot along this colonnade, for it has its beſt effect in this view. In our preſent ſituation it is plain, that the rays from the firſt round pillar will cauſe in the eye a vibration of that ſpecies; an image of the pillar itſelf. The pillar immediately ſucceeding increaſes it; that which follows renews and enforces the impreſſion; each in its order as it ſucceeds, repeats impulſe after impulſe, and ſtroke after ſtroke, until the eye, long exerciſed in one particular way, cannot loſe that object immediately; and being violently rouſed by this continued agitation, it preſents the mind with a grand or ſublime conception. But inſtead of viewing a rank of uniform pillars;

lars; let us ſuppoſe, that they ſucceed each other, a round and a ſquare one alternately. In this caſe the vibration cauſed by the firſt round pillar periſhes as ſoon as it is formed; and one of quite another ſort (the ſquare) directly occupies its place; which however it reſigns as quickly to the round one; and thus the eye proceeds, alternately, taking up one image, and laying down another, as long as the building continues. From whence it is obvious, that at the laſt pillar, the impreſſion is as far from continuing as it was at the very firſt; becauſe in fact, the ſenſory can receive no diſtinct impreſſion but from the laſt; and it can never of itſelf reſume a diſſimilar impreſſion: beſides, every variation of the object is a reſt and relaxation to the organs of ſight; and theſe reliefs prevent that powerful emotion ſo neceſſary to produce the ſublime. To produce therefore a perfect grandeur in ſuch things as we have been mention-

ing,

ing, there ſhould be a perfect ſimplicity, an abſolute uniformity in diſpoſition, ſhape, and colouring. Upon this principle of ſucceſſion and uniformity it may be aſked, why a long bare wall ſhould not be a more ſublime object than a colonnade; ſince the ſucceſſion is no way interrupted; ſince the eye meets no check; ſince nothing more uniform can be conceived? A long bare wall is certainly not ſo grand an object as a colonnade of the ſame length and height. It is not altogether difficult to account for this difference. When we look at a naked wall, from the evenneſs of the object, the eye runs along its whole ſpace, and arrives quickly at its termination; the eye meets nothing which may interrupt its progreſs; but then it meets nothing which may detain it a proper time to produce a very great and laſting effect. The view of a bare wall, if it be of a great height and length, is undoubtedly grand: but this is only *one* idea,

and

and not a *repetition* of *ſimilar* ideas; it is therefore great, not ſo much upon the principle of *infinity*, as upon that of *vaſtneſs*. But we are not ſo powerfully affected with any one impulſe, unleſs it be one of a prodigious force indeed, as we are with a ſucceſſion of ſimilar impulſes; becauſe the nerves of the ſenſory do not (if I may uſe the expreſſion) acquire a habit of repeating the ſame feeling in ſuch a manner as to continue it longer than its cauſe is in action; beſides, all the effects which I have attributed to expectation and ſurpriſe in ſect. 11. can have no place in a bare wall.

SECT. XIV.

Locke's opinion concerning darkneſs, conſidered.

IT is Mr. Locke's opinion, that darkneſs is not naturally an idea of terror; and that though an exceſſive light is painful

painful to the ſenſe, that the greateſt exceſs of darkneſs is no ways troubleſome. He obſerves indeed in another place, that a nurſe or an old woman having once aſſociated the ideas of ghoſts and goblins with that of darkneſs, night ever after becomes painful and horrible to the imagination. The authority of this great man is doubtleſs as great as that of any man can be, and it ſeems to ſtand in the way of our general principle*. We have conſidered darkneſs as a cauſe of the ſublime; and we have all along conſidered the ſublime as depending on ſome modification of pain or terror: ſo that, if darkneſs be no way painful or terrible to any, who have not had their minds early tainted with ſuperſtitions, it can be no ſource of the ſublime to them. But, with all deference to ſuch an authority, it ſeems to me, that an aſſociation of a more general nature, an aſſociation which takes in

* Part II. ſect. 3.

all mankind, may make darkneſs terrible; for in utter darkneſs, it is impoſſible to know in what degree of ſafety we ſtand; we are ignorant of the objects that ſurround us; we may every moment ſtrike againſt ſome dangerous obſtruction; we may fall down a precipice the firſt ſtep we take; and if an enemy approach, we know not in what quarter to defend ourſelves; in ſuch a caſe ſtrength is no ſure protection; wiſdom can only act by gueſs; the boldeſt are ſtaggered, and he who would pray for nothing elſe towards his defence, is forced to pray for light.

Ζευ πατερ, αλλα συ ρυσαι υπ' ηερος υιας Αχαιων·
Ποιησον δ' αιθρην, δος δ' οφθαλμοισιν ιδεσθαι·
Εν δε φαει και ολεσσον.———

As to the aſſociation of ghoſts, and goblins; ſurely it is more natural to think, that darkneſs, being originally an idea of terror, was choſen as a fit ſcene for ſuch terrible repreſentations, than

that ſuch repreſentations have made darkneſs terrible. The mind of man very eaſily ſlides into an error of the former ſort; but it is very hard to imagine, that the effect of an idea ſo univerſally terrible in all times, and in all countries, as darkneſs, could poſſibly have been owing to a ſet of idle ſtories, or to any cauſe of a nature ſo trivial, and of an operation ſo precarious.

SECT. XV.

DARKNESS terrible in its own nature.

PERHAPS it may appear on enquiry, that blackneſs and darkneſs are in ſome degree painful by their natural operation, independent of any aſſociations whatſoever. I muſt obſerve, that the ideas of darkneſs and blackneſs are much the ſame; and they differ only in this, that blackneſs is a more confined idea. Mr. Cheſelden has given

us a very curious ſtory of a boy, who had been born blind, and continued ſo until he was thirteen or fourteen years old; he was then couched for a cataract, by which operation he received his ſight. Among many remarkable particulars that attended his firſt perceptions and judgments on viſual objects, Cheſelden tells us, that the firſt time the boy ſaw a black object, it gave him great uneaſineſs; and that ſome time after, upon accidentally ſeeing a negro woman, he was ſtruck with great horror at the ſight. The horror, in this caſe, can ſcarcely be ſuppoſed to ariſe from any aſſociation. The boy appears by the account to have been particularly obſerving and ſenſible for one of his age; and therefore it is probable, if the great uneaſineſs he felt at the firſt ſight of black had ariſen from its connexion with any other diſagreeable ideas, he would have obſerved and mentioned it. For an idea, diſagreeable only by aſſociation, has the

cauſe of its ill effect on the paſſions evident enough at the firſt impreſſion; in ordinary caſes, it is indeed frequently loſt; but this is, becauſe the original aſſociation was made very early, and the conſequent impreſſion repeated often. In our inſtance, there was no time for ſuch an habit; and there is no reaſon to think that the ill effects of black on his imagination were more owing to its connexion with any diſagreeable ideas, than that the good effects of more cheerful colours were derived from their connexion with pleaſing ones. They had both probably their effects from their natural operation.

SECT. XVI.

Why DARKNESS is terrible.

IT may be worth while to examine how darkneſs can operate in ſuch a manner as to cauſe pain. It is obſervable, that ſtill as we recede from the light, nature has ſo contrived it, that the pupil is enlarged by the retiring of the iris, in proportion to our receſs. Now, inſtead of declining from it but a little, ſuppoſe that we withdraw entirely from the light; it is reaſonable to think, that the contraction of the radial fibres of the iris is proportionably greater; and that this part may by great darkneſs come to be ſo contracted, as to ſtrain the nerves that compoſe it beyond their natural tone; and by this means to produce a painful ſenſation. Such a tenſion it ſeems there certainly is, whilſt we are involved in darkneſs; for in ſuch a ſtate,

whilſt

whilſt the eye remains open, there is a continual niſus to receive light; this is manifeſt from the flaſhes and luminous appearances which often ſeem in theſe circumſtances to play before it; and which can be nothing but the effect of ſpaſms, produced by its own efforts in purſuit of its object; ſeveral other ſtrong impulſes will produce the idea of light in the eye, beſides the ſubſtance of light itſelf, as we experience on many occaſions. Some who allow darkneſs to be a cauſe of the ſublime, would infer, from the dilation of the pupil, that a relaxation may be productive of the ſublime as well as a convulſion: but they do not I believe conſider, that although the circular ring of the iris be in ſome ſenſe a ſphincter, which may poſſibly be dilated by a ſimple relaxation, yet in one reſpect it differs from moſt of the other ſphincters of the body, that it is furniſhed with antagoniſt muſcles, which

are the radial fibres of the iris: no ſooner does the circular muſcle begin to relax, than theſe fibres, wanting their counterpoiſe, are forcibly drawn back, and open the pupil to a conſiderable wideneſs. But though we were not apprized of this, I believe any one will find, if he opens his eyes and makes an effort to ſee in a dark place, that a very perceivable pain enſues. And I have heard ſome ladies remark, that after having worked a long time upon a ground of black, their eyes were ſo pained and weakened, they could hardly ſee. It may perhaps be objected to this theory of the mechanical effect of darkneſs, that the ill effects of darkneſs or blackneſs ſeem rather mental than corporeal: and I own it is true, that they do ſo; and ſo do all thoſe that depend on the affections of the finer parts of our ſyſtem. The ill effects of bad weather appear often no otherwiſe, than in a melan-

melancholy and dejection of ſpirits; though without doubt, in this caſe, the bodily organs ſuffer firſt, and the mind through theſe organs.

SECT. XVII.

The effects of BLACKNESS.

BLackneſs is but a *partial darkneſs*; and therefore it derives ſome of its powers from being mixed and ſurrounded with coloured bodies. In its own nature, it cannot be conſidered as a colour. Black bodies, reflecting none, or but a few rays, with regard to ſight, are but as ſo many vacant ſpaces diſperſed among the objects we view. When the eye lights on one of theſe vacuities, after having been kept in ſome degree of tenſion by the play of the adjacent colours upon it, it ſuddenly falls into a relaxation; out of which it as ſuddenly recovers by a convulſive ſpring. To illuſtrate

luſtrate this; let us conſider, that when we intend to ſit in a chair, and find it much lower than we expected, the ſhock is very violent; much more violent than could be thought from ſo ſlight a fall as the difference between one chair and another can poſſibly make. If, after deſcending a flight of ſtairs, we attempt inadvertently to take another ſtep in the manner of the former ones, the ſhock is extremely rude and diſagreeable; and by no art can we cauſe ſuch a ſhock by the ſame means when we expect and prepare for it. When I ſay that this is owing to having the change made contrary to expectation; I do not mean ſolely, when the *mind* expects. I mean likewiſe, that when any organ of ſenſe is for ſome time affected in ſome one manner, if it be ſuddenly affected otherwiſe, there enſues a convulſive motion; ſuch a convulſion as is cauſed when any thing happens againſt the expectance of the mind. And though

it

it may appear ſtrange that ſuch a change as produces a relaxation, ſhould immediately produce a ſudden convulſion; it is yet moſt certainly ſo, and ſo in all the ſenſes. Every one knows that ſleep is a relaxation; and that ſilence, where nothing keeps the organs of hearing in action, is in general fitteſt to bring on this relaxation: yet when a ſort of murmuring ſounds diſpoſe a man to ſleep, let theſe ſounds ceaſe ſuddenly, and the perſon immediately awakes; that is, the parts are braced up ſuddenly, and he awakes. This I have often experienced myſelf, and I have heard the ſame from obſerving perſons. In like manner, if a perſon in broad day light were falling aſleep, to introduce a ſudden darkneſs, would prevent his ſleep for that time, though ſilence and darkneſs in themſelves, and not ſuddenly introduced, are very favourable to it. This I knew only by conjecture on the analogy of the ſenſes when I firſt digeſted theſe obſervations;

but

but I have ſince experienced it. And I have often experienced, and ſo have a thouſand others, that on the firſt inclining towards ſleep, we have been ſuddenly awakened with a moſt violent ſtart; and that this ſtart was generally preceded by a ſort of dream of our falling down a precipice: whence does this ſtrange motion ariſe, but from the too ſudden relaxation of the body, which by ſome mechaniſm in nature reſtores itſelf by as quick and vigorous an exertion of the contracting power of the muſcles? The dream itſelf is cauſed by this relaxation: and it is of too uniform a nature to be attributed to any other cauſe. The parts relax too ſuddenly, which is in the nature of falling; and this accident of the body induces this image in the mind. When we are in a confirmed ſtate of health and vigour, as all changes are then leſs ſudden, and leſs on the extreme, we can ſeldom complain of this diſagreeable ſenſation.

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

The effects of BLACKNESS moderated.

THOUGH the effects of black be painful originally, we muſt not think they always continue ſo. Cuſtom reconciles us to every thing. After we have been uſed to the ſight of black objects, the terror abates, and the ſmoothneſs and gloſſineſs or ſome agreeable accident of bodies ſo coloured, ſoftens in ſome meaſure the horror and ſternneſs of their original nature; yet the nature of the original impreſſion ſtill continues. Black will always have ſomething melancholy in it, becauſe the ſenſory will always find the change to it from other colours too violent; or if it occupy the whole compaſs of the ſight, it will then be darkneſs; and what was ſaid of darkneſs, will be applicable here. I do not purpoſe to go into all that might be

ſaid

ſaid to illuſtrate this theory of the effects of light and darkneſs; neither will I examine all the different effects produced by the various modifications and mixtures of theſe two cauſes. If the foregoing obſervations have any foundation in nature, I conceive them very ſufficient to account for all the phænomena that can ariſe from all the combinations of black with other colours. To enter into every particular, or to anſwer every objection, would be an endleſs labour. We have only followed the moſt leading roads; and we ſhall obſerve the ſame conduct in our enquiry into the cauſe of beauty.

SECT. XIX.

The phyſical cauſe of LOVE.

WHEN we have before us ſuch objects as excite love and complacency; the body is affected, ſo far as I could obſerve, much in the following manner:

manner: The head reclines ſomething on one ſide; the eye-lids are more cloſed than uſual, and the eyes roll gently with an inclination to the object; the mouth is a little opened, and the breath drawn ſlowly, with now and then a low ſigh; the whole body is compoſed, and the hands fall idly to the ſides. All this is accompanied with an inward ſenſe of melting and languor. Theſe appearances are always proportioned to the degree of beauty in the object, and of ſenſibility in the obſerver. And this gradation from the higheſt pitch of beauty and ſenſibility, even to the loweſt of mediocrity and indifference, and their correſpondent effects, ought to be kept in view, elſe this deſcription will ſeem exaggerated, which it certainly is not. But from this deſcription it is almoſt impoſſible not to conclude, that beauty acts by relaxing the ſolids of the whole ſyſtem. There are all the appearances of ſuch a relaxation; and a relaxation ſomewhat below

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the natural tone ſeems to me to be the cauſe of all poſitive pleaſure. Who is a ſtranger to that manner of expreſſion ſo common in all times and in all countries, of being ſoftened, relaxed, enervated, diſſolved, melted away by pleaſure? The univerſal voice of mankind, faithful to their feelings, concurs in affirming this uniform and general effect: and although ſome odd and particular inſtance may perhaps be found, wherein there appears a conſiderable degree of poſitive pleaſure, without all the characters of relaxation, we muſt not therefore reject the concluſion we had drawn from a concurrence of many experiments; but we muſt ſtill retain it, ſubjoining the exceptions which may occur according to the judicious rule laid down by Sir Iſaac Newton in the third book of his Optics. Our poſition will, I conceive, appear confirmed beyond any reaſonable doubt, if we can ſhew that ſuch things as we have already obſerved to be the genuine conſtituents of beauty,

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have each of them, ſeparately taken, a natural tendency to relax the fibres. And if it muſt be allowed us, that the appearance of the human body, when all theſe conſtituents are united together before the ſenſory, further favours this opinion, we may venture, I believe, to conclude, that the paſſion called love is produced by this relaxation. By the ſame method of reaſoning which we have uſed in the enquiry into the cauſes of the ſublime, we may likewiſe conclude, that as a beautiful object preſented to the ſenſe, by cauſing a relaxation in the body, produces the paſſion of love in the mind; ſo if by any means the paſſion ſhould firſt have its origin in the mind, a relaxation of the outward organs will as certainly enſue in a degree proportioned to the cauſe.

SECT. XX.

Why SMOOTHNESS is beautiful.

IT is to explain the true cauſe of viſual beauty, that I call in the aſſiſtance of the other ſenſes. If it appears that *ſmoothneſs* is a principal cauſe of pleaſure to the touch, taſte, ſmell, and hearing, it will be eaſily admitted a conſtituent of viſual beauty; eſpecially as we have before ſhewn, that this quality is found almoſt without exception in all bodies that are by general conſent held beautiful. There can be no doubt that bodies which are rough and angular, rouſe and vellicate the organs of feeling, cauſing a ſenſe of pain, which conſiſts in the violent tenſion or contraction of the muſcular fibres. On the contrary, the application of ſmooth bodies relax; gentle ſtroking with a ſmooth hand allays vio-

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lent pains and cramps, and relaxes the ſuffering parts from their unnatural tenſion; and it has therefore very often no mean effect in removing ſwellings and obſtructions. The ſenſe of feeling is highly gratified with ſmooth bodies. A bed ſmoothly laid, and ſoft, that is, where the reſiſtance is every way inconſiderable, is a great luxury, diſpoſing to an univerſal relaxation, and inducing beyond any thing elſe, that ſpecies of it called ſleep.

SECT. XXI.

SWEETNESS, its nature.

NOR is it only in the touch, that ſmooth bodies cauſe poſitive pleaſure by relaxation. In the ſmell and taſte, we find all things agreeable to them, and which are commonly called ſweet, to be of a ſmooth nature, and

that they all evidently tend to relax their reſpective ſenſories. Let us firſt conſider the taſte. Since it is moſt eaſy to enquire into the property of liquids, and ſince all things ſeem to want a fluid vehicle to make them taſted at all, I intend rather to conſider the liquid than the ſolid parts of our food. The vehicles of all taſtes are *water* and *oil*. And what determines the taſte is ſome ſalt, which affects variouſly according to its nature, or its manner of being combined with other things. Water and oil, ſimply conſidered, are capable of giving ſome pleaſure to the taſte. Water, when ſimple, is inſipid, inodorous, colourleſs, and ſmooth; it is found when *not cold* to be a great reſolver of ſpaſms, and lubricator of the fibres: this power it probably owes to its ſmoothneſs. For as fluidity depends, according to the moſt general opinion, on the roundneſs, ſmoothneſs, and weak coheſion of the compo-

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nent parts of any body; and as water acts merely as a ſimple fluid; it follows, that the cauſe of its fluidity is likewiſe the cauſe of its relaxing quality; namely, the ſmoothneſs and ſlippery texture of its parts. The other fluid vehicle of taſtes is *oil*. This too, when ſimple, is inſipid, inodorous, colourleſs, and ſmooth to the touch and taſte. It is ſmoother than water, and in many caſes yet more relaxing. Oil is in ſome degree pleaſant to the eye, the touch, and the taſte, inſipid as it is. Water is not ſo grateful; which I do not know on what principle to account for, other than that water is not ſo ſoft and ſmooth. Suppoſe that to this oil or water were added a certain quantity of a ſpecific ſalt, which had a power of putting the nervous papillæ of the tongue into a gentle vibratory motion; as ſuppoſe ſugar diſſolved in it. The ſmoothneſs of the oil, and the vibratory power of the ſalt, cauſe the ſenſe we call ſweetneſs. In all ſweet bodies,

ſugar, or a ſubſtance very little different from ſugar, is conſtantly found; every ſpecies of ſalt, examined by the microſcope, has its own diſtinct, regular, invariable form. That of nitre is a pointed oblong; that of ſea-ſalt an exact cube; that of ſugar a perfect globe. If you have tried how ſmooth globular bodies, as the marbles with which boys amuſe themſelves, have affected the touch when they are rolled backward and forward and over one another, you will eaſily conceive how ſweetneſs, which conſiſts in a ſalt of ſuch nature, affects the taſte; for a ſingle globe, (though ſomewhat pleaſant to the feeling) yet by the regularity of its form, and the ſomewhat too ſudden deviation of its parts from a right line, it is nothing near ſo pleaſant to the touch as ſeveral globes, where the hand gently riſes to one and falls to another; and this pleaſure is greatly increaſed if the globes are in motion, and fliding over one another; for this ſoft variety prevents

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that wearineſs, which the uniform diſpoſition of the ſeveral globes would otherwiſe produce. Thus in ſweet liquors, the parts of the fluid vehicle, though moſt probably round, are yet ſo minute, as to conceal the figure of their component parts from the niceſt inquiſition of the microſcope; and conſequently being ſo exceſſively minute, they have a ſort of flat ſimplicity to the taſte, reſembling the effects of plain ſmooth bodies to the touch; for if a body be compoſed of round parts exceſſively ſmall, and packed pretty cloſely together, the ſurface will be both to the ſight and touch as if it were nearly plain and ſmooth. It is clear from their unveiling their figure to the microſcope, that the particles of ſugar are conſiderably larger than thoſe of water or oil, and conſequently, that their effects from their roundneſs will be more diſtinct and palpable to the nervous papillæ of that nice organ the tongue: they will induce that ſenſe called ſweet-

neſs, which in a weak manner we diſcover in oil, and in a yet weaker in water; for, inſipid as they are, water and oil are in ſome degree ſweet; and it may be obſerved, that inſipid things of all kinds approach more nearly to the nature of ſweetneſs than to that of any other taſte.

SECT. XXII.

SWEETNESS relaxing.

IN the other ſenſes we have remarked, that ſmooth things are relaxing. Now it ought to appear that ſweet things, which are the ſmooth of taſte, are relaxing too. It is remarkable, that in ſome languages ſoft and ſweet have but one name. *Doux* in French ſignifies ſoft as well as ſweet. The Latin *Dulcis*, and the Italian *Dolce*, have in many caſes the ſame double ſignification. That ſweet things are generally relaxing, is evident; becauſe

becauſe all ſuch, eſpecially thoſe which are moſt oily, taken frequently or in a large quantity, very much enfeeble the tone of the ſtomach. Sweet ſmells, which bear a great affinity to ſweet taſtes, relax very remarkably. The ſmell of flowers diſpoſes people to drowſineſs; and this relaxing effect is further apparent from the prejudice which people of weak nerves receive from their uſe. It were worth while to examine, whether taſtes of this kind, ſweet ones, taſtes that are cauſed by ſmooth oils and a relaxing ſalt, are not the originally pleaſant taſtes. For many, which uſe has rendered ſuch, were not at all agreeable at firſt. The way to examine this is, to try what nature has originally provided for us, which ſhe has undoubtedly made originally pleaſant; and to analyſe this proviſion. *Milk* is the firſt ſupport of our childhood. The component parts of this are water, oil, and a ſort of a very ſweet ſalt, called the ſugar of milk. All theſe when

blended

blended have a great *ſmoothneſs* to the taſte, and a relaxing quality to the ſkin. The next thing children covet is *fruit*, and of fruits thoſe principally which are ſweet; and every one knows that the ſweetneſs of fruit is cauſed by a ſubtile oil, and ſuch a ſalt as that mentioned in the laſt ſection. Afterwards, cuſtom, habit, the deſire of novelty, and a thouſand other cauſes, confound, adulterate, and change our palates, ſo that we can no longer reaſon with any ſatisfaction about them. Before we quit this article, we muſt obſerve, that as ſmooth things are, as ſuch, agreeable to the taſte, and are found of a relaxing quality; ſo, on the other hand, things which are found by experience to be of a ſtrengthening quality, and fit to brace the fibres, are almoſt univerſally rough and pungent to the taſte, and in many caſes rough even to the touch. We often apply the quality of ſweetneſs, metaphorically, to viſual objects. For the better carrying

on this remarkable analogy of the ſenſes, we may here call ſweetneſs the beautiful of the taſte.

SECT. XXIII.

VARIATION, why beautifnl.

ANOTHER principal property of beautiful objects is, that the line of their parts is continually varying its direction; but it varies it by a very inſenſible deviation; it never varies it ſo quickly as to ſurprize, or by the ſharpneſs of its angle to cauſe any twitching or convulſion of the optic nerve. Nothing long continued in the ſame manner, nothing very ſuddenly varied, can be beautiful; becauſe both are oppoſite to that agreeable relaxation which is the characteriſtic effect of beauty. It is thus in all the ſenſes. A motion in a right line, is that manner of moving next to a very gentle deſcent, in which we meet

meet the leaſt reſiſtance: yet it is not that manner of moving, which, next to a deſcent, wearies us the leaſt. Reſt certainly tends to relax: yet there is a ſpecies of motion which relaxes more than reſt; a gentle oſcillatory motion, a riſing and falling. Rocking ſets children to ſleep better than abſolute reſt; there is indeed ſcarce any thing at that age, which gives more pleaſure than to be gently lifted up and down; the manner of playing which their nurſes uſe with children, and the weighing and ſwinging uſed afterwards by themſelves as a favourite amuſement, evince this very ſufficiently. Moſt people muſt have obſerved the ſort of ſenſe they have had, on being ſwiftly drawn in an eaſy coach on a ſmooth turf, with gradual aſcents and declivities. This will give a better idea of the beautiful, and point out its probable cauſe better, than almoſt any thing elſe. On the contrary, when one is hurried over a rough, rocky, broken road,

road, the pain felt by theſe ſudden inequalities ſhews why ſimilar ſights, feelings, and ſounds, are ſo contrary to beauty: and with regard to the feeling, it is exactly the ſame in its effect, or very nearly the ſame, whether, for inſtance, I move my hand along the ſurface of a body of a certain ſhape, or whether ſuch a body is moved along my hand. But to bring this analogy of the ſenſes home to the eye: if a body preſented to that ſenſe has ſuch a waving ſurface, that the rays of light reflected from it are in a continual inſenſible deviation from the ſtrongeſt to the weakeſt (which is always the caſe in a ſurface gradually unequal), it muſt be exactly ſimilar in its effect on the eye and touch; upon the one of which it operates directly, on the other indirectly. And this body will be beautiful if the lines which compoſe its ſurface are not continued, even ſo varied, in a manner that may weary or diſſipate the attention. The variation itſelf muſt be continually varied.

SECT.

SECT. XXIV.

Concerning SMALLNESS.

TO avoid a ſameneſs, which may ariſe from the too frequent repetition of the ſame reaſonings, and of illuſtrations of the ſame nature, I will not enter very minutely into every particular that regards beauty, as it is founded on the diſpoſition of its quantity, or its quantity itſelf. In ſpeaking of the magnitude of bodies there is great uncertainty, becauſe the ideas of great and ſmall are terms almoſt entirely relative to the ſpecies of the objects, which are infinite. It is true, that having once fixed the ſpecies of any object, and the dimenſions common in the individuals of that ſpecies, we may obſerve ſome that exceed, and ſome that fall ſhort of, the ordinary ſtandard: theſe which greatly exceed, are by that exceſs, provided

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the ſpecies itſelf be not very ſmall, rather great and terrible than beautiful; but as in the animal world, and in a good meaſure in the vegetable world likewiſe, the qualities that conſtitute beauty may poſſibly be united to things of greater dimenſions; when they are ſo united, they conſtitute a ſpecies ſomething different both from the ſublime and beautiful, which I have before called *Fine*; but this kind, I imagine, has not ſuch a power on the paſſions, either as vaſt bodies have which are endued with the correſpondent qualities of the ſublime; or as the qualities of beauty have when united in a ſmall object. The affection produced by large bodies adorned with the ſpoils of beauty, is a tenſion continually relieved; which approaches to the nature of mediocrity. But if I were to ſay how I find myſelf affected upon ſuch occaſions, I ſhould ſay, that the ſublime ſuffers leſs by being united to ſome of the qualities of

beauty,

beauty, than beauty does by being joined to greatneſs of quantity, or any other properties of the ſublime. There is ſomething ſo over-ruling in whatever inſpires us with awe, in all things which belong ever ſo remotely to terror, that nothing elſe can ſtand in their preſence. There lie the qualities of beauty either dead and unoperative; or at moſt exerted to mollify the rigour and ſternneſs of the terror, which is the natural concomitant of greatneſs. Beſides the extraordinary great in every ſpecies, the oppoſite to this, the dwarfiſh and diminutive ought to be conſidered. Littleneſs, merely as ſuch, has nothing contrary to the idea of beauty. The humming bird, both in ſhape and colouring, yields to none of the winged ſpecies, of which it is the leaſt; and perhaps his beauty is enhanced by his ſmallneſs. But there are animals, which when they are extremely ſmall are rarely (if ever) beautiful. There is a dwarfiſh ſize of men

and

and women, which is almoſt conſtantly ſo groſs and maſſive in compariſon of their height, that they preſent us with a very diſagreeable image. But ſhould a man be found not above two or three feet high, ſuppoſing ſuch a perſon to have all the parts of his body of a delicacy ſuitable to ſuch a ſize, and otherwiſe endued with the common qualities of other beautiful bodies, I am pretty well convinced that a perſon of ſuch a ſtature might be conſidered as beautiful; might be the object of love; might give us very pleaſing ideas on viewing him. The only thing which could poſſibly interpoſe to check our pleaſure is, that ſuch creatures, however formed, are unuſual, and are often therefore conſidered as ſomething monſtrous. The large and gigantic, though very compatible with the ſublime, is contrary to the beautiful. It is impoſſible to ſuppoſe a giant the object of love. When we let our imagination looſe in romance, the ideas

we naturally annex to that ſize are thoſe of tyranny, cruelty, injuſtice, and every thing horrid and abominable. We paint the giant ravaging the country, plundering the innocent traveller, and afterwards gorged with his half-living fleſh: ſuch are Polyphemus, Cacus, and others, who make ſo great a figure in romances and heroic poems. The event we attend to with the greateſt ſatisfaction is their defeat and death. I do not remember, in all that multitude of deaths with which the Iliad is filled, that the fall of any man remarkable for his great ſtature and ſtrength touches us with pity; nor does it appear that the author, ſo well read in human nature, ever intended it ſhould. It is Simoiſius, in the ſoft bloom of youth, torn from his parents, who tremble for a courage ſo ill ſuited to his ſtrength; it is another hurried by war from the new embraces of his bride, young, and fair, and a novice to the field, who melts us

by his untimely fate. Achilles, in ſpite of the many qualities of beauty, which Homer has beſtowed on his outward form, and the many great virtues with which he has adorned his mind, can never make us love him. It may be obſerved, that Homer has given the Trojans, whoſe fate he has deſigned to excite our compaſſion, infinitely more of the amiable ſocial virtues than he has diſtributed among his Greeks. With regard to the Trojans, the paſſion he chooſes to raiſe is pity; pity is a paſſion founded on love; and theſe *leſſer*, and if I may ſay domeſtic virtues, are certainly the moſt amiable. But he has made the Greeks far their ſuperiors in politic and military virtues. The councils of Priam are weak; the arms of Hector comparatively feeble; his courage far below that of Achilles. Yet we love Priam more than Agamemnon, and Hector more than his conqueror Achilles. Admiration is the paſſion which Homer would excite in favour

of the Greeks, and he has done it by beſtowing on them the virtues which have but little to do with love. This ſhort digreſſion is perhaps not wholly beſide our purpoſe, where our buſineſs is to ſhew, that objects of great dimenſions are incompatible with beauty, the more incompatible as they are greater; whereas the ſmall, if ever they fail of beauty, this failure is not to be attributed to their ſize.

SECT. XXVI.

Of COLOUR.

WITH regard to colour, the diſquiſition is almoſt infinite; but I conceive the principles laid down in the beginning of this part are ſufficient to account for the effects of them all, as well as for the agreeable effects of tranſparent bodies, whether fluid or ſolid. Suppoſe I look at a bottle of muddy liquor,

of a blue or red colour: the blue or red rays cannot paſs clearly to the eye, but are ſuddenly and unequally ſtopped by the intervention of little opaque bodies, which without preparation change the idea, and change it too into one diſagreeable in its own nature, conformable to the principles laid down in ſect. 24. But when the ray paſſes without ſuch oppoſition through the glaſs or liquor, when the glaſs or liquor are quite tranſparent, the light is ſomething ſoftened in the paſſage, which makes it more agreeable even as light; and the liquor reflecting all the rays of its proper colour *evenly*, it has ſuch an effect on the eye, as ſmooth opaque bodies have on the eye and touch. So that the pleaſure here is compounded of the ſoftneſs of the tranſmitted, and the evenneſs of the reflected light. This pleaſure may be heightened by the common principles in other things, if the ſhape of the glaſs which holds the tranſparent liquor be ſo judiciouſly varied, as

to present the colour gradually and interchangeably weakened and strengthened with all the variety which judgment in affairs of this nature shall suggest. On a review of all that has been said of the effects, as well as the causes of both; it will appear, that the sublime and beautiful are built on principles very different, and that their affections are as different: the great has terror for its basis; which, when it is modified, causes that emotion in the mind, which I have called astonishment; the beautiful is founded on mere positive pleasure, and excites in the soul that feeling, which is called love. Their causes have made the subject of this fourth part.

The End of the Fourth Part.

A Philoſophical Enquiry

INTO THE

ORIGIN of our IDEAS

OF THE

SUBLIME and BEAUTIFUL.

PART V.

SECT. I.

Of WORDS.

NATURAL objects affect us, by the laws of that connexion, which Providence has eſtabliſhed between certain motions and configurations of bodies, and certain conſequent feelings in our mind. Painting affects in the ſame manner, but with the ſuperadded pleaſure of imitation. Architecture affects by the

laws of nature, and the law of reaſon; from which latter reſult the rules of proportion, which make a work to be praiſed or cenſured, in the whole or in ſome part, when the end for which it was deſigned is or is not properly anſwered. But as to words; they ſeem to me to affect us in a manner very different from that in which we are affected by natural objects, or by painting or architecture; yet words have as conſiderable a ſhare in exciting ideas of beauty and of the ſublime as any of thoſe, and ſometimes a much greater than any of them; therefore an enquiry into the manner by which they excite ſuch emotions is far from being unneceſſary in a diſcourſe of this kind.

SECT.

SECT. II.

The common effect of POETRY, not by raiſing ideas of things.

THE common notion of the power of poetry and eloquence, as well as that of words in ordinary converſation, is, that they affect the mind by raiſing in it ideas of thoſe things for which cuſtom has appointed them to ſtand. To examine the truth of this notion, it may be requiſite to obſerve that words may be divided into three ſorts. The firſt are ſuch as repreſent many ſimple ideas *united by nature* to form ſome one determinate compoſition, as man, horſe, tree, caſtle, &c. Theſe I call *aggregate words*. The ſecond, are they that ſtand for one ſimple idea of ſuch compoſitions, and no more; as red, blue, round, ſquare, and the like. Theſe I call *ſimple abſtract* words. The third,

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are thoſe, which are formed by an union, an *arbitrary* union of both the others, and of the various relations between them in greater or leſſer degrees of complexity; as, virtue, honour, perſuaſion, magiſtrate, and the like. Theſe I call *compound abſtract* words. Words, I am ſenſible, are capable of being claſſed into more curious diſtinctions; but theſe ſeem to be natural, and enough for our purpoſe; and they are diſpoſed in that order in which they are commonly taught, and in which the mind gets the ideas they are ſubſtituted for. I ſhall begin with the third ſort of words; compound abſtracts, ſuch as virtue, honour, perſuaſion, docility. Of theſe I am convinced, that whatever power they may have on the paſſions, they do not derive it from any repreſentation raiſed in the mind of the things for which they ſtand. As compoſitions, they are not real eſſences, and hardly cauſe, I think, any real ideas. Nobody, I believe, immediately on hearing

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the ſounds, virtue, liberty, or honour, conceives any preciſe notions of the particular modes of action and thinking, together with the mixt and ſimple ideas, and the ſeveral relations of them for which theſe words are ſubſtituted; neither has he any general idea, compounded of them; for if he had, then ſome of thoſe particular ones, though indiſtinct perhaps, and confuſed, might come ſoon to be perceived. But this, I take it, is hardly ever the caſe. For put yourſelf upon analyſing one of theſe words, and you muſt reduce it from one ſet of general words to another, and then into the ſimple abſtracts and aggregates, in a much longer ſeries than may be at firſt imagined, before any real idea emerges to light, before you come to diſcover any thing like the firſt principles of ſuch compoſitions; and when you have made ſuch a diſcovery of the original ideas, the effect of the compoſition is utterly loſt. A train of thinking of this ſort, is

is much too long to be purſued in the ordinary ways of converſation, nor is it at all neceſſary that it ſhould. Such words are in reality but mere ſounds; but they are ſounds, which being uſed on particular occaſions, wherein we receive ſome good, or ſuffer ſome evil; or ſee others affected with good or evil; or which we hear applied to other intereſting things or events; and being applied in ſuch a variety of caſes, that we know readily by habit to what things they belong, they produce in the mind, whenever they are afterwards mentioned, effects ſimilar to thoſe of their occaſions. The ſounds being often uſed without reference to any particular occaſion, and carrying ſtill their firſt impreſſions, they at laſt utterly loſe their connexion with the particular occaſions that gave riſe to them; yet the ſound, without any annexed notion, continues to operate as before.

SECT.

SECT. III.

General words before IDEAS.

MR. Locke has ſomewhere obſerved, with his uſual ſagacity, that moſt general words, thoſe belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, eſpecially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are preſented to the mind; and with them, the love of the one, and the abhorrence of the other; for the minds of children are ſo ductile, that a nurſe, or any perſon about a child, by ſeeming pleaſed or diſpleaſed with any thing, or even any word, may give the diſpoſition of the child a ſimilar turn. When afterwards, the ſeveral occurrences in life come to be applied to theſe words, and that which is pleaſant often appears under the name of evil; and what is diſagreeable to nature is called good and virtuous; a ſtrange confuſion

fuſion of ideas and affections ariſes in the minds of many; and an appearance of no ſmall contradiction between their notions and their actions. There are many who love virtue and who deteſt vice, and this not from hypocriſy or affectation, who notwithſtanding very frequently act ill and wickedly in particulars without the leaſt remorſe; becauſe theſe particular occaſions never came into view, when the paſſions on the ſide of virtue were ſo warmly affected by certain words heated originally by the breath of others; and for this reaſon, it is hard to repeat certain ſets of words, though owned by themſelves unoperative, without being in ſome degree affected, eſpecially if a warm and affecting tone of voice accompanies them, as ſuppoſe,

Wiſe, valiant, generous, good, and great.

Theſe words, by having no application, ought to be unoperative; but when

words

words commonly ſacred to great occaſions are uſed, we are affected by them even without the occaſions. When words which have been generally ſo applied are put together without any rational view, or in ſuch a manner that they do not rightly agree with each other, the ſtyle is called bombaſt. And it requires in ſeveral caſes much good ſenſe and experience to be guarded againſt the force of ſuch language; for when propriety is neglected, a greater number of theſe affecting words may be taken into the ſervice, and a greater variety may be indulged in combining them.

SECT. IV.

The effect of WORDS.

IF words have all their poſſible extent of power, three effects ariſe in the mind of the hearer. The firſt is, the *ſound*; the ſecond, the *picture*, or repreſentation

ſentation of the thing ſignified by the ſound: the third is, the *affection* of the ſoul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abſtract* words, of which we have been ſpeaking, (honour, juſtice, liberty, and the like), produce the firſt and the laſt of theſe effects, but not the ſecond. *Simple abſtracts*, are uſed to ſignify ſome one ſimple idea without much adverting to others which may chance to attend it, as blue, green, hot, cold, and the like; theſe are capable of affecting all three of the purpoſes of words; as the *aggregate* words, man, caſtle, horſe, &c. are in a yet higher degree. But I am of opinion, that the moſt general effect even of theſe words, does not ariſe from their forming pictures of the ſeveral things they would repreſent in the imagination; becauſe, on a very diligent examination of my own mind, and getting others to conſider theirs, I do not find that once in twenty times any ſuch picture is formed, and

when

when it is, there is moſt commonly a particular effort of the imagination for that purpoſe. But the aggregate words operate, as I ſaid of the compound abſtracts, not by preſenting any image to the mind, but by having from uſe the ſame effect on being mentioned, that their original has when it is ſeen. Suppoſe we were to read a paſſage to this effect: "The river Danube riſes in a moiſt and mountainous ſoil in the heart of Germany, where winding to and fro, it waters ſeveral principalities, until, turning into Auſtria, and laving the walls of Vienna, it paſſes into Hungary; there with a vaſt flood, augmented by the Saave and the Drave, it quits Chriſtendom, and rolling through the barbarous countries which border on Tartary, it enters by many mouths into the Black ſea." In this deſcription many things are mentioned, as mountains, rivers, cities, the ſea, &c. But let any body examine himſelf, and ſee whether he has had impreſſed on his

imagination any pictures of a river, mountain, watery ſoil, Germany, &c. Indeed it is impoſſible, in the rapidity and quick ſucceſſion of words in converſation, to have ideas both of the ſound of the word, and of the thing repreſented; beſides, ſome words, expreſſing real eſſences, are ſo mixed with others of a general and nominal import, that it is impracticable to jump from ſenſe to thought, from particulars to generals, from things to words, in ſuch a manner as to anſwer the purpoſes of life; nor is it neceſſary that we ſhould.

SECT. V.

Examples that WORDS may affect without raiſing IMAGES.

I Find it very hard to perſuade ſeveral that their paſſions are affected by words from whence they have no ideas; and yet harder to convince them, that

in the ordinary courſe of converſation we are ſufficiently underſtood without raiſing any images of the things concerning which we ſpeak. It ſeems to be an odd ſubject of diſpute with any man, whether he has ideas in his mind or not. Of this, at firſt view, every man, in his own forum, ought to judge without appeal. But, ſtrange as it may appear, we are often at a loſs to know what ideas we have of things, or whether we have any ideas at all upon ſome ſubjects. It even requires a good deal of attention to be thoroughly ſatisfied on this head. Since I wrote theſe papers, I found two very ſtriking inſtances of the poſſibility there is, that a man may hear words without having any idea of the things which they repreſent, and yet afterwards be capable of returning them to others, combined in a new way, and with great propriety, energy, and inſtruction. The firſt inſtance, is that of Mr. Blacklock, a poet blind from his birth. Few men bleſſed

with the moſt perfect ſight can deſcribe viſual objects with more ſpirit and juſtneſs than this blind man; which cannot poſſibly be attributed to his having a clearer conception of the things he deſcribes than is common to other perſons. Mr. Spence, in an elegant preface which he has written to the works of this poet, reaſons very ingeniouſly, and, I imagine, for the moſt part, very rightly, upon the cauſe of this extraordinary phænomenon; but I cannot altogether agree with him, that ſome improprieties in language and thought, which occur in theſe poems, have ariſen from the blind poet's imperfect conception of viſual objects, ſince ſuch improprieties, and much greater, may be found in writers even of an higher claſs than Mr. Blacklock, and who notwithſtanding poſſeſſed the faculty of ſeeing in its full perfection. Here is a poet doubtleſs as much affected by his own deſcriptions as any that reads them can be; and yet he is affected with

this

this ſtrong enthuſiaſm by things of which he neither has, nor can poſſibly have any idea further than that of a bare ſound: and why may not thoſe who read his works be affected in the ſame manner that he was, with as little of any real ideas of the things deſcribed? The ſecond inſtance is of Mr. Saunderſon, profeſſor of mathematics in the univerſity of Cambridge. This learned man had acquired great knowledge in natural philoſophy, in aſtronomy, and whatever ſciences depend upon mathematical ſkill. What was the moſt extraordinary and the moſt to my purpoſe, he gave excellent lectures upon light and colours; and this man taught others the theory of thoſe ideas which they had, and which he himſelf undoubtedly had not. But it is probable that the words red, blue, green, anſwered to him as well as the ideas of the colours themſelves; for the ideas of greater or leſſer degrees of refrangibility being applied to theſe words, and the blind

man being inſtructed in what other reſpects they were found to agree or to diſagree, it was as eaſy for him to reaſon upon the words, as if he had been fully maſter of the ideas. Indeed it muſt be owned he could make no new diſcoveries in the way of experiment. He did nothing but what we do every day in common diſcourſe. When I wrote this laſt ſentence, and uſed the words *every day* and *common diſcourſe*, I had no Images in my mind of any ſucceſſion of time; nor of men in conference with each other; nor do I imagine that the reader will have any ſuch ideas on reading it. Neither when I ſpoke of red, or blue and green, as well as refrangibility, had I theſe ſeveral colours, or the rays of light paſſing into a different medium, and there diverted from their courſe, painted before me in the way of images. I know very well that the mind poſſeſſes a faculty of raiſing ſuch images at pleaſure; but then an act of the will is neceſſary to this;

this; and in ordinary converſation or reading it is very rarely that any image at all is excited in the mind. If I ſay "I ſhall go to Italy next ſummer," I am well underſtood. Yet I believe nobody has by this painted in his imagination the exact figure of the ſpeaker paſſing by land or by water, or both; ſometimes on horſeback, ſometimes in a carriage; with all the particulars of the journey. Still leſs has he any idea of Italy, the country to which I propoſed to go; or of the greenneſs of the fields, the ripening of the fruits, and the warmth of the air, with the change to this from a different ſeaſon, which are the ideas for which the word *ſummer* is ſubſtituted; but leaſt of all has he any image from the word *next*; for this word ſtands for the idea of many ſummers, with the excluſion of all but one: and ſurely the man who ſays *next ſummer*, has no images of ſuch a ſucceſſion, and ſuch an excluſion. In ſhort, it is not only of thoſe

ideas which are commonly called abſtract, and of which no image at all can be formed, but even of particular real beings, that we converſe without having any idea of them excited in the imagination; as will certainly appear on a diligent examination of our own minds. Indeed, ſo little does poetry depend for its effect on the power of raiſing ſenſible images, that I am convinced it would loſe a very conſiderable part of its energy if this were the neceſſary reſult of all deſcription. Becauſe that union of affecting words, which is the moſt powerful of all poetical inſtruments, would frequently loſe its force along with its propriety and conſiſtency, if the ſenſible images were always excited. There is not perhaps in the whole Eneid a more grand and laboured paſſage than the deſcription of Vulcan's cavern in Etna, and the works that are there carried on. Virgil dwells particularly on the formation of the thunder, which he deſcribes unfi-

niſhed

niſhed under the hammers of the Cyclops. But what are the principles of this extraordinary compoſition?

Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquoſæ
Addiderant; rutili tres ignis et alitis auſtri;
Fulgores nunc terrificos ſonitumque, metumque
Miſcebant operi, flammiſque ſequacibus iras.

This ſeems to me admirably ſublime; yet if we attend coolly to the kind of ſenſible images which a combination of ideas of this ſort muſt form, the chimeras of madmen cannot appear more wild and abſurd than ſuch a picture. "*Three rays of twiſted ſhowers, three of* "*watery clouds, three of fire, and three* "*of the winged ſouth wind; then mixed* "*they in the work terrific lightnings, and* "*ſound, and fear, and anger, with pur-* "*ſuing flames.*" This ſtrange compoſition is formed into a groſs body; it is hammered by the Cyclops, it is in part poliſhed, and partly continues rough.

The truth is, if poetry gives us a noble assemblage of words, corresponding to many noble ideas, which are connected by circumstances of time or place, or related to each other as cause and effect, or associated in any natural way, they may be moulded together in any form, and perfectly answer their end. The picturesque connection is not demanded; because no real picture is formed; nor is the effect of the description at all the less upon this account. What is said of Helen by Priam and the old men of his council, is generally thought to give us the highest possible idea of that fatal beauty.

Ου νεμεσις Τρωας και ευκνημιδας Αχαιους,
Τοιη δ' αμφι γυναικι πολυν χρονον αλγεα πασχειν
Αινως δ' αθανατοισι θεης εις ωπα εοικεν.

They cry'd, no wonder such celestial charms
For nine long years have set the world in arms;
What winning graces! what majestic mien!
She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen. POPE.

Here

Here is not one word ſaid of the particulars of her Beauty; nothing which can in the leaſt help us to any preciſe idea of her perſon; but yet we are much more touched by this manner of mentioning her than by thoſe long and laboured deſcriptions of Helen, whether handed down by tradition, or formed by fancy, which are to be met with in ſome authors. I am ſure it affects me much more than the minute deſcription which Spencer has given of Belphebe; though I own that there are parts in that deſcription, as there are in all the deſcriptions of that excellent writer, extremely fine and poetical. The terrible picture which Lucretius has drawn of Religion, in order to diſplay the magnanimity of his philoſophical hero in oppoſing her, is thought to be deſigned with great boldneſs and ſpirit;

Humana ante oculos fædè cum vita jaceret,
In terris, oppreſſa gravi ſub religione,

Que

Quæ caput e cœli regionibus oſtendebat
Horribili deſuper viſu mortalibus inſtans;
Primus Graius homo mortales tollere contra
Eſt oculos auſus.——

What idea do you derive from ſo excellent a picture? none at all, moſt certainly; neither has the poet ſaid a ſingle word which might in the leaſt ſerve to mark a ſingle limb or feature of the phantom, which he intended to repreſent in all the horrors imagination can conceive. In reality poetry and rhetoric do not ſucceed in exact deſcription ſo well as painting does; their buſineſs is, to affect rather by ſympathy than imitation; to diſplay rather the effect of things on the mind of the ſpeaker, or of others, than to preſent a clear idea of the things themſelves. This is their moſt extenſive province, and that in which they ſucceed the beſt.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

POETRY not ſtrictly an imitative art.

HENCE we may obſerve that poetry, taken in its moſt general ſenſe, cannot with ſtrict propriety be called an art of imitation. It is indeed an imitation ſo far as it deſcribes the manners and paſſions of men which their words can expreſs; where *animi motus effert interprete lingua.* There it is ſtrictly imitation; and all merely *dramatic* poetry is of this ſort. But *deſcriptive* poetry operates chiefly by *ſubſtitution*; by the means of ſounds, which by cuſtom have the effect of realities. Nothing is an imitation further than as it reſembles ſome other thing; and words undoubtedly have no ſort of reſemblance to the ideas for which they ſtand.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

How WORDS influence the paſſions.

NOW, as words affect, not by any original power, but by repreſentation, it might be ſuppoſed, that their influence over the paſſions ſhould be but light; yet it is quite otherwiſe; for we find by experience that eloquence and poetry are as capable, nay indeed much more capable, of making deep and lively impreſſions than any other arts, and even than nature itſelf in very many caſes. And this ariſes chiefly from theſe three cauſes. Firſt, that we take an extraordinary part in the paſſions of others, and that we are eaſily affected and brought into ſympathy by any tokens which are ſhewn of them; and there are no tokens which can expreſs all the circumſtances of moſt paſſions ſo fully as words; ſo that if a

perſon

perſon ſpeaks upon any ſubject, he can not only convey the ſubject to you, but likewiſe the manner in which he is himſelf affected by it. Certain it is, that the influence of moſt things on our paſſions is not ſo much from the things themſelves, as from our opinions concerning them; and theſe again depend very much on the opinions of other men, conveyable for the moſt part by words only. Secondly, there are many things of a very affecting nature, which can ſeldom occur in the reality, but the words which repreſent them often do; and thus they have an opportunity of making a deep impreſſion and taking root in the mind, whilſt the idea of the reality was tranſient; and to ſome perhaps never really occurred in any ſhape, to whom it is notwithſtanding very affecting, as war, death, famine, &c. Beſides, many ideas have never been at all preſented to the ſenſes of any men but

by

by words, as God, angels, devils, heaven, and hell, all of which have however a great influence over the paſſions. Thirdly, by words we have it in our power to make ſuch *combinations* as we cannot poſſibly do otherwiſe. By this power of combining we are able, by the addition of well-choſen circumſtances, to give a new life and force to the ſimple object. In painting we may repreſent any fine figure we pleaſe; but we never can give it thoſe enlivening touches which it may receive from words. To repreſent an angel in a picture, you can only draw a beautiful young man winged: but what painting can furniſh out any thing ſo grand as the addition of one word, "the "angel of the *Lord?*" It is true, I have here no clear idea; but theſe words affect the mind more than the ſenſible image did; which is all I contend for. A picture of Priam dragged to the altar's foot, and there murdered, if it were well executed,

cuted, would undoubtedly be very moving; but there are very aggravating circumſtances, which it could never repreſent:

Sanguine fœdentem quos ipſe ſacreverat *ignes.*

As a further inſtance, let us conſider thoſe lines of Milton, where he deſcribes the travels of the fallen angels through their diſmal habitation;

——*O'er many a dark and dreary vale*
They paſs'd, and many a region dolorous;
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp;
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and ſhades of death,
A univerſe of death.

Here is diſplayed the force of union in

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and ſhades;

which yet would loſe the greateſt part of the effect, if they were not the

Rocks, caves, lakes, dens, bogs, fens, and ſhades——
——of Death.

The idea or this affection cauſed by a word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raiſes a very great degree of the ſublime; and this ſublime is raiſed yet higher by what follows, a "*univerſe of Death.*" Here are again two ideas not preſentable but by language; and an union of them great and amazing beyond conception; if they may properly be called ideas which preſent no diſtinct image to the mind:—but ſtill it will be difficult to conceive how words can move the paſſions which belong to real objects, without repreſenting theſe objects clearly. This is difficult to us, becauſe we do not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh, in our obſervations upon language, between a clear expreſſion, and a ſtrong expreſſion. Theſe are frequently confounded with each other, though they

are in reality extremely different. The former regards the underſtanding; the latter belongs to the paſſions. The one deſcribes a thing as it is; the other deſcribes it as it is felt. Now, as there is a moving tone of voice, an impaſſioned countenance, an agitated geſture, which affect independently of the things about which they are exerted, ſo there are words, and certain diſpoſitions of words; which being peculiarly devoted to paſſionate ſubjects, and always uſed by thoſe who are under the influence of any paſſion, touch and move us more than thoſe which far more clearly and diſtinctly expreſs the ſubject matter. We yield to ſympathy what we refuſe to deſcription. The truth is, all verbal deſcription, merely as naked deſcription, though never ſo exact, conveys ſo poor and inſufficient an idea of the thing deſcribed, that it could ſcarcely have the ſmalleſt effect, if the ſpeaker did not call

in to his aid thoſe modes of ſpeech that mark a ſtrong and lively feeling in himſelf. Then, by the contagion of our paſſions, we catch a fire already kindled in another, which probably might never have been ſtruck out by the object deſcribed. Words, by ſtrongly conveying the paſſions, by thoſe means which we have already mentioned, fully compenſate for their weakneſs in other reſpects. It may be obſerved, that very poliſhed languages, and ſuch as are praiſed for their ſuperior clearneſs and perſpicuity, are generally deficient in ſtrength. The French language has that perfection and that defect. Whereas the oriental tongues, and in general the languages of moſt unpoliſhed people, have a great force and energy of expreſſion; and this is but natural. Uncultivated people are but ordinary obſervers of things, and not critical in diſtinguiſhing them; but, for that reaſon, they admire more, and are

more

more affected with what they ſee, and therefore expreſs themſelves in a warmer and more paſſionate manner. If the affection be well conveyed, it will work its effect without any clear idea; often without any idea at all of the thing which has originally given riſe to it.

It might be expected from the fertility of the ſubject, that I ſhould conſider poetry as it regards the ſublime and beautiful more at large; but it muſt be obſerved that in this light it has been often and well handled already. It was not my deſign to enter into the criticiſm of the ſublime and beautiful in any art, but to attempt to lay down ſuch principles as may tend to aſcertain, to diſtinguiſh, and to form a ſort of ſtandard for them; which purpoſes I thought might be beſt effected by an enquiry into the properties of ſuch things in nature, as raiſe love and aſtoniſhment in us; and by ſhewing

ing in what manner they operated to produce theſe paſſions. Words were only ſo far to be conſidered, as to ſhew upon what principle they were capable of being the repreſentatives of theſe natural things, and by what powers they were able to affect us often as ſtrongly as the things they repreſent, and ſometimes much more ſtrongly.

THE END.

δε, c°: 18.

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